

A Commentarie...

upon the two Epistles generall of
Saint Peter, and that of Saint Jude.

First faithfullie gathered out of the
Lectures and Preachings of...

M. Luther.

and now out of Latine ...
translated into Englishe.

London: A Veale: 1581.

Bm Cat
C. 15. a. 9.

1844/134
(3).1724
Lect + 6

A Commentarie...

upon the two Epistles generall of
Saint Peter, and that of Saint Jude.

First faithfullie gathered out of the
Lectures and Preachings of...

M. Luther.

and now out of Latine ...
translated into Englishe.

London: A Veale: 1581.

Bm Cat
C. 15. a. 9.

1844/134
(3).1724
Lect + 6

The title is within a broad pictorial
wood-cut border.

A C O M M E N -
tarie or Exposition vp-
pon the twoo Epistles gene-
rall of Sainct Peter,
and that of Sainct
JVDE.

First faithfullie gathered out of the
Lectures and Preachinges of that wor-
thie Instrumente in Goddes Church,
Dootour Martine Luther. And now
out of Latine, for the singuler benefite
and oomfort of the Godlie, fami-
liarlie translated into En-
glishe by Thomas
Newton.

Imprinted at London for Abraham
Veale dwellyng in Paules Church-
yard at the signe of the Labe.

7

TO THE RIGHT HO-
nourable, Sir Thomas Bromeley

Knight, one of her Maiesties moste ho-
nourable priuie Counsell, and
Lorde Chauncelor of Englaunde.



THE translation of
these godlie and comforta-
ble Commentaries of Mas-
ter Lushier vpon the Epi-
stles generall of the blessed
Apostles Peter and Jude,
beeing fullie finished and brought to an ende, it
was the easiest matter of many, where to bethink
mee of a fitte Patrone, vnder whom to shield the
labours of so worthie an Organe in the Church
of God, and myne owne trauailes therein (suche
as thei bee) fro the rancorous rout of suche ba-
wlyng Baalites and arrogant Apostes, as with o-
pen lawes will bee readie to barke at the sounde
doctrine of Faithe and Maners, by hym beerein
with a moste bolde spirite maintained and ut-
tered. I was (I saie) soone resolved with my selfe
to settle my choise in your Lordshippe: of whose
cheerefull

The Epistle

cheerefull acceptaunce (suche is your Godlie
zeale) I could not any whitte doubt: And of
whose courteous construction of my honest and
harmlesse meaning herein (suche is your ho-
nourable inclination) I deemed it almoste hai-
nous, to put any diffidence, or to harbour within
mee so muche as a sparke or Mite of the leaste
suspition. None so wilfullie blinde, nor so witlef-
tie besotted, but hath bothe seene and knownen,
what a generall benefite it pleased the Lorde in
mercy to shewe vnto the worlde, beeing almoste
wholly wholmed in the Snaddes of Superstition,
and desperate drowned in the Dregges of I-
dolatrie, by the ministerie of this one man: oppo-
sing himselfe in defence of the glorious Gospell
of GOD) againste all the Pedlarie of Pope and
Popelinges, and againste all the rable of Coo-
nyng Caterpillers in the Kyngdome of Darke-
nesse, characterized and brended with the marke
of the Beast. The rising trash and ridiculous
riffraffe of whiche Cacolyke Synagogue (for so
is it muche rather to bee rearmd then Catho-
like) this man with so vehement and zealous a
spirit, hath so thowghtly anatomized and di-
ripped, & by such memorable reasons out of the
infalible

Dedicatione!

infallible Worde of God, ouerthrowen and con-
 futed, that the rotten ragges thereof can not pos-
 sible bee as spoones peece. The crackes credito of
 such a Motheaten stuffe neuer againe salued, nor
 the totteryn g walles of suche a roisynge and ruf-
 fianlyraigne, euer any more after the former ga-
 rantise be reared vp & reestablished. In so muche
 that it must bee thought, that our mercifull God,
 pitying the miserable thraldome wherein his peo-
 ple vnder that Romishe Pharaoh had long lanne
 captiued, and in his Justice, meaning at length
 to ridde the worlde of those deade Flies (whiche
 did nothyng els but corrupte and canker sweete
 Ointmentes) and as it were to lounde those Bot-
 ches and Biles, that so long had festured in the
 bodie of the Common wealth of Israhell, appoin-
 ted and raised up this man, to bee as the Malle
 that should knocke that blasphemous Goliath in
 the pate, and the Leech that should applie vnto
 him. His greaxed generatōs suche a strong Pill,
 whiche they should neuer bee able to swallowe.
 His life also & conuersation beyng so vnblama-
 ble, that the sturkest Balaamite and spightfullest
 Ribbina among them (of which stand there ne-
 uer wanteth foure) coulde neuer in the reproos

The Epistle

hym of faultes, other then suche, as generally fol-
lowe the infirmitie of Man. In so muche as that
reuerend and renoumed Clerke Erasmus (whose
testimonie herein maie stande for many, and the
rather for that he some what to muche (the more
putie) for priuate respectes, bolstered and plaste-
red the deformities and blottes of the Romishe
Clergie, pleasauntly by waie of answere to a que-
stion, mooued vnto hym by the good Duke of Sa-
xony, saied: that the onely reason why poore Lu-
ther was so deadly hated, was for none other
cause, but for that, by his preaching and writing,
hee had taken awaye the Crowne from the Pope
and Bishoppes, and the Beallie from the Mon-
kes: and that other wise he was bothe a Godlie, a
learned, a vertuous, and a modest man. In the
compassyng and atchreuyng whereof, little mer-
uaile was it, though in his Style and maner of
wrytyng, he seemed to some to bee ouer crabbed,
seuere, sharpe, and biting: For (saied he) to re-
mooue sharpe & grosse diseases, God hath sent in
this laste age of the WOrlde, a sharpe & austere
Physitian. And as wee reade of the Repairers of
Battered Hierusalem, that with the one hande
they builde the Wallles, and with the other helde
their

Dedicatorie

their sword, to bee readie to encounter the enemy. So much wee saie of Luther, that he with the one halfe of his studie, combated and conflicted with the Aduersaries of Gods trueth, and with the other halfe, generallie benefited the Church, by penning & writing sundrie notable enarrations vpon the Sacred Scriptures, and Catholique Religion. How valiauntlie also hee plaied the Christian Champion againste Meritmongers, and all Clouters vp of their Salvation with the Figgleanes of their owne wretched VVoorke and condignitie, and what an vndaunted Hercules he shewed hymself, in chopping of still those succreasynge heades of that Italian Hydra, sundrie his learned Bookes plentifullie and at large declare, and this VVoorke among many others doeth sufficientlie attestifie. The whiche with all humilitie I haere offer and exhibite vnto your lordship: assuring my self, that for your approued wisdom, you will not onely allowe of it, but also for the high Authoritie wherein you are worthilie placed, you will accordyngly countenance it. The Lorde from heauen blesse and strengthen you with his Spirite of zeale, fortitude and boldnesse, to be a Buttresse and Proppe for the propagation,

The Epistle

gation, passage, and continuance of his glorious
Gospell among vs, your poore Countreimen of
this noble Realme of Englande, to the encorage-
ment of all true Professours of the same, and to
the utter terrour, extirpation, and weedyng out
of all cankered aduersaries and malicious Grin-
nagods, beyng not onlie prickes in the feete, and
Thornes in the eyes, but euen splintas in the han-
des, and Daggers at the hartes of all the godlie:
That by the prudent pollicie, and carefull vigi-
lancie of your Honour, with others her Maie-
ties moste Noble and zelous Counsellours, all
dollar-drenche Drones may bee espied, and caste
out of the Hieue of the Common wealthe, and er-
ther bee converted, least utterly they perishe, or
speedily confounded, least they procure and
breed more treacherous annoiance.

From Butley in Cheshire;
this first of October.

Your L. most humble,

Thomas Newton.



The argument of this first E-
pistle of S. Peter, by M. Luther.

Before wee fall in hande with the interpretation of this Epistle, it shall bee verie requisite, first to laye downe vnto the Reader some brieue admonition, whereby he may knowe, bothe how it is to bee esteemed, and also how to attaine to the certaine knowledge thereof.



First of all is to bee noted, that all the Apostles doe handle one and the self same doctrine, and therefore is it not well done of some, in that they say there bee onely foure Euangelistes, and foure Gospels, whereas all is one Gospel, what so euer the Apostles haue left in writing.

Now the Gospel signifieth nothing els then the preaching and publishing of the grace and mercie of God through Christ our Loyde, purchased for vs by his death. And to take it properly, it is not that whiche is contained in booke, and comprehended in letters, but rather the vocall preaching, and the liuely worde and voyce, whiche soundeth in the whole worlde, and is so openly vttered, that it maie euery where bee heard. Neither is it a booke that containeth the Lawe, wherein are many points of good doctrine, as it hath bin hitherto commonly beleued. For it draweth vs from all confidence and hope of any worke of our owne, whereby to become righteous, and declareth vnto vs the riche graces of God, freely and without any our owne merite giuen vnto vs by teaching vs alio Christ,

A. J.

who

Vpon the first Epistle

Who hauing by his intercession appeared þe wrath of God, and satisfied for our sinnes, hath quite abolished and blotted out our iniquities and by his works, iustified and made vs righteous.

Now, whosoever either preacheth or writeth these thynges, he teacheth the true Gospell in dede, whiche all the Apostles, but especially S. Paule and S. Peter haue done in their Epistles. Whatsoeuer they is preached or published concerning Christe, is one Gospell, although one handle it after one sorte, and in one kinde of wordes, an other after an other sorte, and in an other kinde. For a thing may be handled either in many wordes or in fewe, and may be described either brieely or at large. Howbeit seeing all tendeth vnto no other ende but to teache vs that Christ is our Saviour, and that we through faith in hym, without any our owne workes, are iustified and saved, it is all one Word, and one Gospell, as there is one onely faith, and one Baptisme in the whole Church of Christ.

Thou readeest then nothing written by any of the Apostles, whiche is not also contained in the writinges of others that were as it were penmen of the Scripture; but thei that haue handled this poynt especially and with greater endeuour and studie then the rest, namely that onely faith in Christ doeth iustifie, euen thei are the best Euangelistes of all. Hereupon thou maiest more rightely call the Epistles of Paule the Gospell, then those thinges whiche Matthew, Marke, and Luke haue written. For thei describe not muche beside the Historie concerning the doinges and miracles of Christe: as for the grace whiche Christe hath purchased for vs, none doeth more fully and sely entreate thereof then S. Paule, especially in his Epistle to the Romans. Now, seeing the Word is of more importance then the actions and doynge of Christe, and that if we should want the one of them, it were farre better to be without the deedes and Historie, then the Wordes and Doctrine, it followeth that those booke are most highly to be esteemed, whiche entreate especially of the doctrine and wordes of our Lorde Iesus Christe. For as muche as if there were no miracles of Christ, and that we were altogether ignorant of them,

per were his wordes sufficient for vs, and without which we
can not so muche as liue.

Whereupon therefore it followeth, that this Epistle of
Peter is to bee accounted among the moste excellent bookes
of the newe Testament, and is the true and pure Gospel, in
as muche as the Apostle therein teacheth nothing els, then that
whiche Paule and the rest of the Euangelistes doe: namely
sincere faith, and that Christe is freely giuen vnto vs, who ha-
uing taken awaye our sinnes, is our onely Sauour, as in the
proceſſe of this Epistle we shall see. By this that is here saied,
wee maie likewise iudge of all bookes and doctrines, what is
the Gospel, & what is not. For whatsoeuer is not either prea-
ched or written after this sort, and to this ende, that maie truly
holdly iudge not to bee the Gospel, haue it neuer so faire and
goodly a shewe. This power to iudge haue al Christians,
and not the Pope or Councels alone, whiche face
and crake that thei and none but thei haue au-
thoritie to iudge of doctrines. And thus
muche maie suffice for the argu-
ment: let vs now heare
the Epistle.



And thus muche maie suffice for the argument: let vs now heare
the Epistle.

The first Epistle generall
of Saint Peter.

The first Chapter.



Ever an Apostle of Iesus Christe;
to the straungers that dwell here
and there throughout Pontus, Ga-
laria, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithy-
nia,

Elect accordyng to the fore-
knowledge of GOD the Father
vnto sanctification of the Spirit,
through obedience and sprinck-

ling of the blood of Iesus Christ: Grace and peace be multi-
plied vnto you.

3 Blessed be GOD, even the Father of our Lorde Iesus
Christ, whiche according to his abundant mercie hath be-
gotten vs againe vnto a liuely hope by the resurrection of Ie-
sus Christ from the dead,

4 To ascribe vnto Iesus Christ immortall and vndefiled, and that
fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Whiche are kept by the power of God through faith
vnto saluation, whiche is prepared to bee shewed in the last
tyme.

6 Wherein ye reioyce, though now for a season (if neede
require) ye are in heavynesse, through manifold tentations,

7 That the triall of your faith, beyng much more precious
then gold that perisheth (though it be tried with fire) might
be founde vnto your praise, and honour and glorie, at the ap-
pearyng of Iesus Christ:

8 Whom ye haue not seene, and yet loue him, in whom
now, though ye see hym not, yet do you beleue, and reioyce
with

with ioye, vnſpeakable and glorious

9 Receiuyng the ende of your faith, euen the ſaluation of your ſoules.

10 Of the whiche ſaluation the Prophets haue inquired and ſearched, whiche prophesied of the grace that ſhould come vnto you,

11 Searchyng when or what tyme the Spirit which re- ſuſcited Chriſt which he was in them, ſhould declare the ſuffrynges that ſhould come vnto Chriſt, and the glorie that ſhould followe.

12 Vnto whom it was reueled, that not vnto themſelues, but vnto vs thei ſhould miniſter the thinges which are now ſhewed vnto you by them whiche haue preached vnto you the Goſpell by the holy Ghoſt ſent doune from heauen, the whiche thinges the Angels deſire to beholde.

13 Wherefore girde vp the loynes of your minde: bee ſo- ber, & truſt perfectly on the grace that is brought vnto you, by the reuelation of Ieſus Chriſt,

14 As obedient children, not faſhioning your ſelues vnto the former luſtes of your ignorance:

15 But ſuch as he which hath called you is holy, ſo be ye ho- ly in all manner of conuerſation,

16 Becauſe it is written: Be ye holy, for I am holy.

17 And if ye call him Father, whiche without reſpect of perſone iudgeth according to euery mans worke, paſſe the tyme of your dwellyng here in feare:

18 Knowing that ye were not redeemed with corruptible thinges, as ſiluer and golde, from your vaine conuerſation, receiued by the traditions of the fathers,

19 But with the precious bloud of Chriſt, as of a Lambe vndeſiled, and without ſpot.

20 Whiche was ordeined before the foundation of the worlde, but was declared in the laſt tymes for your ſakes,

21 Which by his meanes doe belecue in God that raiſed him from the dead, and gaue him glorie, that your faith and hope might be in God,

Vpon the first Epistle

22 Having purified your soules in obeying the truth
brought to the Spirit, so loue brotherly without fauouring, loue
one another with a pure harte feruently,

23 Being bothe a newe, not of mortall seede, but of im-
mortall, by the worde of God, who liueth and endureth for
euer.

24 For all fleshe is as grasse, and all the glorie of man is as
the flower of grasse. The grasse withereth, and the flower
falleth awaie.

25 But the worde of the Lord endureth for euer: and this
is the worde which is preached among you.



26 And ye call him brother, and ye call him fellowe, and ye
call him companion, and ye call him fellowe, and ye call him
companion, and ye call him fellowe, and ye call him companion.

27 Knowing that ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection, and ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection, and ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection.

28 Therefore ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection, and ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection, and ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection.

29 Therefore ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection, and ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection, and ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection.

30 Therefore ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection, and ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection, and ye were not yet brought to the
full perfection.

The first Chapter.

Verse 1. Peter an Apostle of Iesus Christ, to the strangers that dwell here and there throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.

2 Elect accordyng to the foreknowledge of God the Father, vnto the sanctification of the Spirit, through obedience and sprinklyng of the blood of Iesus Christ.



This is bothe an inscription and subscription. Thou seest here in the verbe begynnynge, that that whiche is here wyrtten, is the Gospel. He saith that he is an Apostle, whiche signifieth a Legate or Messenger, that doeth by worde of mouthe the busynesse whiche he hath receiued in charge: which name, being so englished of the Greeke worde Αποστολος, because it is now commonly knowne, what it signifieth, I haue not thought it good by any other phrase or terme, to expresse and translate it. Howbeit properly it signifieth hym, that declareth something by worde of mouth: not a mere carrier of letters, but a messenger that with lively voice deliuereth his errand, and by wordes uttereth his commission and charge: and suche in Latine we call Oratores, that is, Orators. Whereas the he calleth himselfe the Apostle of Iesus Christ, it is as much as if he had saide: I haue charge from Iesus Christ, to preache of this same Iesus Christ vnto you. Marke here how at the first they are excluded & debarred whatsoeuer they be, & preache any of the boggie and doctryng doctrines of sette toothe and vaine men: for he is a messenger of Iesus Christ, whiche doeth that whiche Christ hath commaunded hym: If he preache any other thyng, he is not Christes messenger, and therefore is unwyse to bee heard. But if he preache that whiche Christ hath commaunded hym, then is he to bee heard: and to heare hym is as muche as to heare Christ hymselfe being present.

Vpon the first Epistle

I

To the Strangers, Elect

The Apostle wrote this Epistle to those Countreies that are here mentioned. Thei were in tyme past Christian, but are now in miserable subiection and slaue rie vnto the Turke, among whom thou maest perhaps euen at this daie finde some that faithfullie beleue in Christe. Pontus is a greate and large countreie bordering vpon the sea: next vnto it is Cappadocia, the borders and limites of which two countreies are almoste conioyned. On the hinder parte is Galatia, on the former toward the Sea Asia, and Bithynia, all situate toward the East, greate and large Countreies. Paule preached personallie in Galatia & Asia, whether he did þe same also in Bithynia, I doe not certainly knowe: But in the furthermost two, it is certain that he did not preache. Strangers are thei whom we call Forreiners, namely such as come fro some other place, and not borne in the Countreie wherein we are. Now the Apostle calleth them so, because thei had been Gentiles. Neither is it to be thought straunge, that Peter keeping the Apostle of the Jewes, did neuertheless write also vnto the Gentiles. The Jewes call those Proselytes, (that is, admitted to the state of the Jewes) who keeping not lineallie of their stocke, and of the blood of Abraham, had notwithstanding embraced Iudaisme, and submitted them selues to the obseruation of their lawe. To these therefore the Apostle writeth, who before had been Gentiles, and therefore no members of the common wealth of Israel, but keeping now conuerted to the faith, had adioyned them selues to the faithfull Jewes. Wherefore he calleth them Strangers Elect, whom undoubtedly hee holdeth to be true Christians, and to these alone he writeth. Which manner of calling them, containeth in it no contradiction doctrine, as we shall hereafter more at large heare.

2 According to the knowledge of GOD the Father.

OT

De

HE calleth the Elect, but how? Surely not of them selues, but accordyng to the ordinance of GOD. For it lieth not in our owne powers, to buyng our selues vnto heauen, nor to haue faithe when wee liste: neither will God receiue into heauen all whom so euer: Naie, hee will verie diligently and circumspectly liste, examine, and trie all them that be his. Awaie therefore with all mannes doctrine of free will, and of all strength in our selues: this thing dependeth not of our, but of Gods good will and election.

2 Vnto sanctification of the Spirit.

God hath predestinate vs to be holie, and that spirituallie. These wordes, holie and spirituall, the Belligods of the Romishe Cleargie, haue shameleslie taken from the true professors of the Gospell, and entailed the same vnto their Papeistlike Monkerie, whiche state thei doe now call holie and spirituall. Euen as thei haue doon by this name Church, so that thei will haue none but the Pope and his miſsed Bishops, to bee the Church, sayng, that the Church hath commaunded this and that: whereas thei in the meane tyme at their pleasures, doe and determine what thei liste. Holinesse consisteth in nothyng lesse then in this, that one bee a Monk, a Freere, or a Nunne, or to bee a Shauelyng and weare a Coule, or some peltynge religious habite.

The word, Spirit, signifieth that we should be holie in hart, inwardly and in spirit before God. And this is saied especialy for this cause, to shewe that nothing is holie, but that whiche God maketh holie in vs. For at that tyme the Jewes had many outward sanctifications, but the true sanctification thei had not. This then is the meanynge of saint Peter: God hath predestinate you to this ende, that now at the last ye should be holie in deede, accordyng as saint Paul saith in the fourth to the Ephesians: In righteousness and true holinesse, that is in holinesse whiche is entere, and altogether entire. For surly outward holinesse as the Jewes had, is nothyng esteemed

Vpon the first Epistle

not regarded before God. After this sort doeth the Scripture call vs, holie and Sainctes, when wee beleue, beeing as yet liuing here on earth. But our Rabbines the Papistes, haue taken this name from vs, saying that we are not Holie, but that they onely are Holie, whiche are in heauen. We must therefore repossesse, and againe take this notable name vnto vs. Thou must needes be Holie, yet must thou not thinke that thou hast this holinesse of thy self, or by thine owne merite, but that thou art therefore Holie for that thou hast the worde of GOD: for that the kyngdome of heauen is thine, and for that thou art become entirely righteous and holy through Christ. These thinges must thou confesse, if thou wilt bee a Christian. For this were extreme ignominie, & blasphemie to the name of Christ, if we should so denie this honour to his blood, as not to beleue that by it onely our synnes are cleane washed awaie, and wee sanctified. Thou must beleue therefore and confesse, that thou art holie, yet by the blood of Christ, not by thine owne righteousness: and this thou must doe with suche certaintie and constancie, that in this cause thou maiest not sticke (if neede be) to spende euen thy life, and boldly to abide and looke for whatsoeuer maie herevpon come vnto thee.

2 Through obedience and sprinklyng of the blood of Iesus Christe.



After this sorte saith the Apostle, commeth it to passe that wee bee holie, when wee beleue and obey the Worde of Christ, and are sprinkled with his blood. And here saint Peter hath vsed some what an other manner of speeche then saint Paule: Yet is it in effectte as muche as when S. Paule saith, wee are saued through Faith in Christ: because it is Faith whiche maketh that wee bee attentive, and obedient to Christ and his holie Worde. Therefore to obey the Worde of God, is as muche as to bee subiect to Christ, to bee sprinkled with his blood and to beleue. For it is verie greuous to Nature

Nature, to bee so wholie subiect to Christe, as altogether to forsowe and renne from our owne nature, altogether to neglect our owne causes, and to counie all that we doe to be synnes: Nature therefore stoutly resisteth, and striueth againste this doctrine, and yet neuerthelesse it must at the laste stoupe and yeele it self therunto.

Of Sprincklyng we read in the 51 Psalm. Sprinkle me with Hyssop, O Lorde, and I shalbe cleane. He alludeth to the Lawe of Moses, from whence sainte Peter tooke this kinde of speche, thereby to reuele Moses vnto vs, and as it were to hyng vs into the kynges highwaie of rightispynderstandyng the Scriptures. For whē Moses had builded the Tabernacle, he tooke the blood of Goates, and therewith sprinckled bothe the Tabernacle and all the people. Now this sprincklyng did not inwardly sanctifie in spirite, but quely outwardly and in external things, and therefore is there neede of a spirituall cleansyng, soasmuche as that sanctification was outward and carnall, wherof there is no regarde before God: yet did God thereby as it were, by a Type or figure, signifie this spirituall sanctification. That then whiche sainte Peter here saith is thus muche in effecte: The Jewes please them selues in outward holynesse, wherby they are thought righteous, and of a good life before men, but they counte you among the reprobate, whiche you haue a sprincklyng farre better, for ye are sprinckled in spirite, and are cleansed inwardly. The Jewes sprinckle them selues with the blood of Goates outwardly, but ye are sprinckled in your consciences inwardly, so that your harte is cleane and therefore heretofore you haue greates cause to reioyce.

¶ Whereof it is that the Gentiles haue no more Gentiles: even as those righteous Jewes are no more righteous by their sprincklyng, for these thynges are now chaungen and altered. None other sprincklyng is required, but that whiche may conuert vs, and make vs spirituall. Now to sprinckle after this sorte, is nothing els then to preache, that Christe hath for this cause shed his blood, onely to make intercession for vs vnto his father, and to saue: Apostle saith. Forher, than first herre we find

Vpon the first Epistle

blood, whiche I haue shedde for this synner. Here, if thou doe beleeuie, thou art truely sprinkled. And thus thou seest what is the true maner of sprinklyng. Now if all the Popes, Popenkes, and sacrificyng Prelates should at once tumble together and bypnyng all their trasse, rifferaffe and baggage; thei are not able either to teache, or doe so muche as S. Peter doeth here in these fewe wordes. And this is the subscription of the Epistle, toheren he declareth his office, what that is whiche he preacheth. Wherefoze that whiche is here taught, is the onely Gospell: all other kindes of doctrine (if men accoumpe thein any waie necessarye to saluation) whiche sounde not after this forte, are to bee trodden vnder our feete, reiected, forsaken, refused, and abandoned: Yea all those bookes are to bee loathed, and misliked, whiche hauyng gaye titles of good Moookes, Prayers, Indulgenes, Pardons and suche like, are not plainlie, directlie, and soundlie grounded vpon this foundation.

2. Grace and peace be multiplied vnto you.

Here S. Peter obserueth that maner whiche the Apostle Paul in his salutyng useth, although not in euery respect. And that which he saith is in effect thus muche: We haue now peace & grace, but not perfectly, therfoze muste we continually profite, untill that olde Adam bee wholly killed and mortified in you. Grace is the fauour of God: here hath it his begynnyng in vs, but needefull and requisite is it that it alwaies become daily moze and moze effectuell in vs, and take increase euen till our dyng daie. He that acknowledgeth, beleueth and is fully perswaded in his conscience, that God is fauourable vnto him, is assuredly possessed of this grace: and his hart comfortably enioyeth peace, so that he feareth neither the world nor Demilles. For he knoweth that God, who hath power ouer al thynges, is fauourable and mercifull vnto him, and that he will deliuer him from death, hell, and al incommodities whatsoeuer: hereupon his conscience is at peace withyn it self and is ioyfull and glad. This doeth Saind Peter here witte vnto

into the faithfull, which is a true Christian salutation, where-
with all Christians ought to salute one an other. Thus haue
wee the inscription with the salutation, and now begunneth he
the matter of his Epistle.

3 Blessed be God, euen the Father of our Lorde
Iesus Christ, whiche according to his abundant
mercie hath begotten vs againe vnto a liuely hope
by the resurrection of Iesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance immortall and vndefiled,
and that fadeth not awaie, reserved in heauen for
vs,

5 Which are kept by the power of God through
faith vnto saluation, whiche is prepared to be she-
wed in the last tyme:

6 Wherein ye reioyce, though now for a season
(if neede require) ye are in heauines through ma-
nifolde tentations:

7 That the triall of your faith, beyng much more
precious then golde that perisheth (though it bee
tryed with fire) might be founde vnto your praise
and honour and glorie at the appearyng of Iesus
Christ:

8 Whom ye haue not seen, and yet loue hym, in
whom now though ye see him not, yet do you be-
leeue, and reioyce with ioye vnspakeable and
glorious,

9 Receiuing the ende of your faith, euen the sal-
uation of your soules.



In this Induction or Preface we see the wor-
des and nature of a true Apostolicall Writ-
tinge: such a beginning (I saie) wherein wee maie
plainly perceiue and note that to be true, which
was said afore: namely that this Epistle amon-
g all the rest is of most singular excellencie. For, in the verie

Vpon the first Epistle


entrancee hee beginneth to declare what Christe is, and what benefite wee receiue by hym, when as hee saith, that wee are begotten againe of God vnto a liuely hope by the resurrection of Iesus Christ. Also that all giftes are bestowed vpon vs of the Father, of his mere mercie without any our deserte. These are in deede true and right Euangelicall phrazes, these are comfutable speeches moste meete to bee published and preached. But (alas) what small noare of suche kinde of preaching is there to bee founde in the Bookes, euen of them that are accounted the best. The written workes euen of Hierome and Augustine, what small consonancie and agreement haue they with these wordes? And yet must Iesus Christ bee thus preached, that he died and rose againe, and why hee died and did rise againe: that men heeving thronghly moued with this kinde of preaching, maie beleue in hym, and beleeving maie obtaine saluation. This it is to preache the true Gospell in deede. Whatsoeuer is not preached after this sorte, is not the Gospell, whofoeuer hee bee that preacheth it.

The very summe then and effect of these wordes is this: that Christ by his resurrection hath brought vs to his father, and here by also Sainet Peter goeth about euen by our Lorde Iesus Christe to bring vs to the Father, and to set hym a mediator betweene God and vs. It hath bin hitherto preached that wee must call vpon Sainers, to bee our intercessors with God. Whereupon wee haue runne to the holy Virgine Marie, and haue made her our Mediatour, leauing Christe in the meane season as an angrie Iudge. So doeth not the Scripture, it cometh and approcheth nerer: it giueth this glozie to Christ our Lord, that he is our onely mediator, by whom alone we must come vnto the Father. Inestimable treasure which is giuen vs by Christe, namely that wee maie goe to the Father and aske the inheritance wherof Sainet Peter here speaketh.

These wordes doe moreouer plainly shewe what mynde the Apostle had, why that so earnestly and with such vehement ardencie he began to praise the Father, and will haue vs also

to praise and blesse hym, for the incomparable riches which he hath giuen vnto vs, in that he hath begotten vs againe, and that before we could euen so muche as thinke thereof, muche lesse praeuent hym, so that here is nothing remaining to preach and praise, but the onely merrie of God. And therefore can we boaste of no workes at all, but must confesse that we haue all through his onely mercie, whatsoeuer wee haue. There is now no more Lawe, no wrath as in tyme past there was, whiche made the Iewes to flie, being striken with terror, so that they durst not goe vnto the Mount. God doeth not now still urge and strike vs, but handleth vs as fauourably as maie be, fashionyng and makyng vs anewe: neither giueth hee vs grace to doe one good woorkke or twoo, but frameth in vs a newe creature and a newe life, so that wee bee now an other thyng then wee were before when wee were the sonnes of Adam: namely wee are translated from the inheritance of Adam to the inheritance of God, that hee maie bee our Father, and we his children, and therein his heires euen of all good thynges that he hath. See what excellent thynges are in the Scripture handled concernyng this matter. Now inasmuche as wee are regenerate, and the sonnes and heires of God, wee are equall in dignitie and honoꝝ with Saint Paule, Saint Peter, the holy Virgin Marie, and all the Saints. For wee haue the same treasure from God, and all good thynges as largely as they. They were no otherwise regenerate then we, wherefore they haue no moze then all other Christians.

3 Vnto a liuely hope.

 Our life here vpon the earth, is for none other cause, but that we should help others, otherwise it were best that God should euen straight after our baptism, and the receiuyng of faith, ende our daies, and suffer vs to dye. Howbeit he permitteth vs to liue here to this ende, that we maie bring others also vnto the faith, which he him self hath doen to vs before. Now while wee liue here

Vpon the first Epistle

on the earth, wee liue in hope. For albeit wee be certaine that through faith wee haue all the good thinges of God (for faith as it assuredly bringeth with it regeneration, so doeth it bring also adoption and inheritance) howbeit we see not this as yet, and therefore doeth it as yet consist in hope, being somewhat removed from our sight that wee can not see and beholde it. Now this the Apostle calleth the hope of life: which is an Hebrew kinde of speche, as is this, The man of sinne. Wee call that a liuely hope, whereby we certainly hope & assuredly looke for eternall life, whiche is now hid as it were with a veile, that it can not bee seene, neither is it presently perceived but in the harte through faith, as Iohn in his first Epistle Chap. 3. writeth: Now are wee the sonnes of God, and yet doeth it not appeare what wee shalbe: but we knowe that when he shal appeare, we shalbe like hym: for we shall see hym as he is.

Because the life present, and the life to come can not be together, neither can it bee that wee should eate, drinke, sleepe, watche, and doe other workes of Nature which this life bringeth with it, and bee there with also blessed: therefore can wee not attaine vnto this, to liue for ever, vnesse wee first dye, and forgoe this present life. Therefore while wee here liue, wee must still stande in hope vntill it please God to call vs hence to beholde and see, those good thinges which we now hope after. And how make we come vnto this liuely hope? By the resurrection, (saith the Apostle of Iesus Christ) from the dead. I haue oftentimes saied, that none can rightly beleene in God, and come vnto hym without a meane, for as muche as wee are all the childe of wrath, and of our selues can doe nothing that is acceptable before God: wee haue therefore neede of another, by whom we make appeare before hym, who may make intercession for vs, and reconcile vs vnto hym. Now there is none other mediator then the Lord Christ, who is the Sonne of God. It is therefore no true faith whiche the Turkes and Iewes haue, who saie and beleene that GOD is the maker bothe of heauen and earth: for thus doeth the Devil also beleue, and yet doeth this beleefe nothing at all profite hym.

The

They presume to come into the sight of God without Christe the mediator. Thus saith Saint Paul in the first to the Romans: Wee haue access vnto God through faith, (not by our selues, but) by Christ. Wherefore wee must haue Christe with vs, wee must come with hym, wee must satisfie God by hym, and doe all thinges with God by hym and in his name. The same is this in effect whiche Saint Peter saith in this place: for it is as muche as if he had said: we certainly looke for eternall life although wee liue here on the earth: yet no otherwise then by the resurrection of Christe, that is to saie, even therefore, because he is risen againe, ascended into heauen, and sitteth on the right hande of his Father. For this cause did hee ascende, that he might giue vnto vs his spirit, whereby being regenerate we might bee bolde to goe to the Father and saie: Behold I come before thee O mercifull father, and praye vnto thee, not that I putte any trust or confidence in any power of myne owne, but for that my Lorde Christ doeth make intercession for me, and is myne Advocate. All these wordes carrie an ardent efficacie and fierie force, where there is a harte that beleeueth: where the harte beleueth not, there all suche wordes are colde, neither doeth the conscience feelee any comfort thereby.

Wee maie here also iudge and knowe, whiche is sincere doctrine and true Christian preaching and which is not. For, hee that is a preacher of the Gospell, must moste zelously and diligently preach forthe the resurrection of Christ: whiche he that doeth not, is no Apostle. For this is the Summe of our faith. And those Bookes of all other are the best and the excellentest, whiche teache and treat vpon this pointe principally and chiefly, as before hath bene declared. This article of our faith is of most waightie importance, for if Christ had not risen againe, all our comforte and hope were in vaine: and all whatsoeuer Christ hath either done or suffered, should be to vs in no neede. And therefore this manner of teaching is moste requisite. Beholde, Christ hath dyed for vs, and taken vpon him to satisfie for vs to the iustice of his Father, against Sinne,

Vpon the first Epistle

Death and Hell, with whom he had a more sharpe and bitter encounter, yet could none of them overcome hym, but were by hym all conquered and subdued, for that he was the stronger. He rose again (maugre the forces of them all) & brought them in subjection to himself, and that for none other cause, but to set vs free and at libertie, out of the danger and thralldome of them. This if wee steadfastly beleue, wee haue a perfect assurance and full possession of all these benefites: whiche being eche waie impossible to bee brought to passe by our selues or any strength that is in vs, it sheweth that Christ should performe the same. Otherwise, there had been no cause, why he should haue descended from heauen hither among vs, wile we yettred and sinfull men.

And therefore when men in preachyng attribute any of these thinges to our woorkes, they doe nothyng els but cause that these so necessarie pointes of doctrine cannot afterwards take any place in the hartes of the hearers, nor be rightly vnderstood of them. O, how well ought these thinges to be known to vs Christians, how thoughtfully ought this Epistle to be vnderstande of vs.

4 To an inheritance immortall and vndefiled, and that fadeth not awaie.



WE hope not for suche a substance and inheritance, as is not present: but wee liue in hope of an inheritance whiche is present in deede, and is immortall, is also vndefiled, and fadeth not awaie. This inheritance wee haue perpetually,

and without ende: howbeit wee doe not as yet see the same. These are wordes forcible, and of wonderfull efficacie: and he in whose minde they are firmly fixed, will be (as I thinke) little troubled with desire of riches, and pleasures of this worlde. For how can it bee, that one should so set his minde vpon these transitorie riches and delights, if he beleue those thynges, whiche bee here spoken? For when worlde lie weale, and ter-

rent treasures bee compared to these things; it appeareth
straight, how those things of the worlde endure but a small
tyme; and doe soone passe away; but these things continue for
ever, and doe neuer faile nor fade. Moreover, all the thynges
of the worlde are impure, and doe defile vs, for there is no man
here so goodly, but in one respect or other he is caried away, and
defiled with the vankies and pleasure things of this life: but
this inheritance is undefiled and pure, and he that possesseth
thesame, remaineth for ever immaculate. Finally, this inhe-
ritance doeth not fade, doeth not decay, neither is euer subject
to any corruption: but euerie earthly thyng, although it bee
as hard as Iron and Stones, is neuertheless changed, and
continually not still. As soone as man also becommeth old, his
beautie is gone, and he becommeth loathsome and vnaurable.
Howbeit, this inheritance is farre from mutation or change,
it alwaies remaineth, it is alwaies fresh and flourishing.
There is no pleasure so great as the earthly, whiche will not
by continuance become loathsome and repulsive, as we see there
is at the laste a tediousnesse in all thynges: but our good thyng-
es here spoken of, are otherwise, wherof there is no faulcie
for ever. All whiche we obtaine in Christ, through the mercie
of GOD, whom we firmly beleue, that sheweth freely giuen
vnto vs. For how should we miserable men by our owne wor-
kes merite those so great good thynges, whiche no reason or
vnderstanding of man is able so muche as to comprehend, or
by imagination of hartte once to conceiue?

Reserued in heaven for you.

This inheritance immortall, undefiled, and that fa-
deth not away is undoubtedly ours: it is onely for a
little while remoued and kepte from our sight, vntill
these eyes bee closed vpp, and this mortall life ended: Then
shall we certainly finde and see the same, vntill we bee vnder
keeping. And because we should not doubt of the certaintie
therof, the Apostle here addeth that this inheritance, wherof

Vpon the first Epistle

unto no corruption can cleaue, is reserved for vs in heauen.

5 Which are kepte by the power of God through
faith vnto saluation.



Where in hope (saith the Apostle) looke for this
excellent inheritance, wherunto wee come
by faith. For these doe in this sorte followe
one another: By the Croope is wrought
in vs faith: by faith that newe birth, and
by this newe birthe wee come vnto hope, so
that wee certainly looke for these thynges, and are thynghle
assured thereof. Wherefore saint Peter saith here saith that
these thynges must be done by faith, and not by our workes.

The Apostle here expressely saith: Ye are by the power
of God kepte vnto saluation. There are many who haupng
hears the Gospell, how that faith onely doeth iustitie without
workes, doe by and by burst forth and saie: Wee also doe be-
leue: thynkyng that that bare opinion, whiche they seine vnto
themselues, is right faith. Wee haue already taught, and
that out of the Scriptures, that it is not in our power to doe
euē the least good worke that is, without the especiall as-
sistance of Gods Spirit; how then shall wee by our owne
strength arrogate that, whiche of all other is most excellent,
namely to beleue? These cogitations therefore are a mere
dreme, and thynges vaine and sonde: Gods power must bee
present to worke in vs, as saint Paule writeth, Ephes. 1.
17. God giue vnto you the Spirit of wisdom, that yee
maie knowe what is the excedyng greatnesse of his power
to vs warde whiche beleue, accordyng to the working of
his mightie power. &c. For it is not onely by the will of God,
but also by a certaine power of his, that we doe beleue: where-
by wee are to learne, that it is no lesse matter to make faith
in one, then it is to create againe heauen and earth.

Wee maie euidently perceiue therefore, that the little
knowe what they saie, whiche vse suche wordes as these: how
can

can onely faiche doe all, keeping many beleue which doe no good woorkes at all: For thei thinke their owne imagination to bee faiche, and that faiche also maie bee without good woorkes. But wee saie with sainte Peter, that faiche is the power of GOD: In whom soeuer God woorketh thus, the same is a regenerate and a new borne creature, so that then offsaith there can not but naturallly followe good woorkes. Wherefore, it shalbe needlesse to saie to a Christian doe this or doe that good woorkes: forasmuche as of his owne accord, and bidden, he woorketh nothing but good woorkes. Howbeit he is to bee hereof admonished, that he dooe not deceiue hym self with any false, counterfaite, and supposed faiche. Doe not therefore take any regarde to those vaine talkers, that can praise muche of these thynges, whose woorkes notwithstanding, are but as winde & meere trifles. Of such, Paule speaketh, 1. Cor. 4. I will come vnto you, and will knowe, not the wordes of them that are puffed vp, but spirituall power. For the kyngdome of GOD consisteth not in woorkes, but in power. Where this power of GOD is not, there is neither true faiche, nor good woorkes. Wherefore thei vndoubtedly are liars, which boast themselves of the name and faich of Christ, and doe (notwithstanding) leade a lewde and wicked life. For assuredly if the power of God bee present, thei can not but become other maner of men then suche.

But what meaneth that, whereas S. Peter saith: By the power of God ye are kepte vnto saluation: surely euen this: Faiche (which the power of God keeping in vs, and wherewith wee are replenished) doeth woorkes in vs, is a thing so noble and excellence, that by it wee haue certaine and manifeste knowledge of all thynges, that pertaine to saluation: keeping now able to iudge, and freely pronounce of all thynges, which are in the pearch, as for example: This doctrine is sincere, and sounde, that is corrupt and false: this life is good, that is euill: this was well doone, that otherwile. And what soeuer suche a man doeth define, and determine, is so in deede. For hee can not bee deceiued, but is preserved and kepte by the power of

God, & remaineth iudge of all doctrines. Contradictio[n]wise, where
 such and the power of God is, there is nothing but error,
 and blindness: there reason is carried away hither and thither,
 from one wo[r]ke to another; in as much as it strueth by be-
 atune wo[r]kes to come into heu[n]en, and therefore all waite
 thinketh: Behold, this will bryng me to heu[n]en, let me wo[r]ke
 this, and I shall bee partaker of eternall felicitie and blessed-
 nesse. Hereupon haue ouerspread the wo[r]lde such rabbles and
 swarmes of Monasteries, Aitars, sacrificyng Priestes, Pon-
 kes, Friers, and Choristes. Into such greace blindnesse doeth
 God suffer them to fall, whiche doe not beleue: but to vs that
 beleue hee preserveth and affordeth a right understanding in
 all chynge[s], that wee maie not bee condemned through this
 blindnesse, but through his mercie attaine saluati[n]e.

¶ 5 Which is prepared to be shewed in the laste tyme.

That is, the inheritaunce wherunto ye are appointed,
 is already purchased, and from the begynnyng of the
 wo[r]lde prepared, but now it is hid, it is as yet couered,
 and as it were closed and sealed up: but after a while it shall in
 a moment be opened and reueiled, that we maie plainly see it.

¶ 6 Wherein ye reioyce, though now for a season (if
 neede require) ye are in heauinesse, through mani-
 fold tentations.

If thou bee a Christian, and lookest for this in-
 heritaunce of saluati[n]e, thou must needs whol-
 ly depende vpon it, and dete[r]ly contemne all
 earthly thynges: thou must also confesse, and o-
 penly affirme, that all the vnderstandyng, wise-
 dome, & holinesse of this wo[r]lde is altogether nothing. Where-
 fore thou must looke for no other, but that the wo[r]lde will con-
 demne and persecute thee: And therefore hath Saint Peter
 rightlie ioy[n]ed together these, Faith, Hope, and the
 crosse

crosse of affliction; for althowhe as one of these place reth out
 of an other. Howbeit he giueth vs shal comforte to them that
 suffer persecution: for his woordes haue thus: This
 heauynesse shall endure but a little while, after ward ye shall for
 euer reioyce. For saluation is alreadye prepared for you, whiche
 shall bee in the meane season patient in afflictions, whiche ye
 suffer. This is a right and Christian consolation, not as the
 doctrines of men doe comforte, whiche haue relation no further
 but to be ridde and deliuered from our waies discommodities.
 The Apostle speaketh not here of any such easie comforte.
 It is no discommoditie, if our troubles come: with a good
 courage sustaine & suffer yea; & thinke not how ye make shewe
 theim of, and bee deliuered from theim, but rather thinke thus
 with your selves: Myne inheritance is alreadye prepared, these
 afflictions shall shortly cease. So shall this temporall con-
 solation be taken awaye, and that eternall consolation whiche wee
 haue in God, supplie the place thereof. Howeuer these wordes
 are diligently to be noted, whiche the Apostle addeth, when he
 saith (if neede require) whiche in effect he intendeth also after-
 ward Chapter 3. in these wordes: If the will of God be so.
 There be many men which (as it were), with a certayne force
 strue to come vnto heauen; and euen by and by to thynke it;
 and therefore laye vpon them selues a crosse, and an affliction
 according to their owne opinion and iudgement: so fondlie is
 reason giuen to extoll her owne woordes. But God utterlie
 disalloweth all suche dealing. For our owne woordes whiche
 wee make choise of, are not of any force before hym, we must
 looke what he will laie vpon vs; and what he will sende vnto
 vs; that we make waies and followe whither he doeth lead and
 guide vs. Therefore there is no neede why thou shouldest
 seeke or poynt to thy self affliction: if neede so require, that
 is, if it be the will of God that thou shalte suffer, then the ar-
 fullie take the Crosse vpon thee, and comforte thy self with
 hope, and expectacion of that saluation, whiche is not tempo-
 rall, but eternall.

Vpon the first Epistle

7 That the triall of your faith, being much more precious then golde, that perisheth (though it be tried with fire) might be founde &c.



This is the effect of the crosse and of those manifold afflictions whiche wee suffer in this life, that sincere faith maie bee knowne from that whiche is false and counterfeit. And for this cause doeth the Lord so afflict vs, that our faith maie be tried, exerceled and made manifest to the world, that others also maie bee invited and wonne to the same faith by our example, and wee at the last maie attaine vnto glorie. For as wee praise God: so will he againe also praise, glorifie, and honour vs: when as those counterfeit and liying Hypocrites, who haue contemned the right waie, shall be subiect to shame and confusion. The Scripture doeth often compare the crosse vnto fire: so here Saint Peter compareth gold which is tried with fire, to the triall of faith whiche is made by the crosse and afflictions. The fire doeth not diminish the Golde, but cleanseeth and purifieth it; that whatsoever drossie substance is mixed with it, moie be separated from it. After the same sorte layeth God the crosse vpon all Christians, whereby thei maie be (as it were) scourged and polished. And it was well said of the Apostle: That the trial of your faith &c. That is your faith must be tried and purified, euen as the Worde is pure, whereunto alone ye must sticke, and trust vnto nothing els. Now, this purgung, scourgung and polishing of vs by the crosse, is daily very necessary for vs, because other wise that olde and dull Adam would still to muche hang vpon vs, and dull the spirit, and make our faith impure.

Suche then is the life of a true Christian; that it continually becometh better and purer. For when through the worde of the Gospell we doe beleue, we are iudged and beginne to be purged: yet as long as we are in the flesh, we can not be altogether cleane and pure. And therefore direct God ead vs into the midst of the fire, that is, into affliction, ignominie and

and trouble, whereby wee are daily more and more purged, vntill suche tyme as wee dye. This purgynge wee can attayne vnto by no workes of our owne: for how should the outwarde worke purifie the harte within? Now, when saith is after this softe cried, whatsoeuer was mixed with it, or was seined and counterfait, must needs bee remoued and separated from it. Hereupon at the last when Christe shall appeare, shall followe magnificent honour, praise, and glorie.

- 8 And reioyce with ioye vnspeakeable & glorious;
- 9 Receiuyng the ende of your faith, euen the saluation of your soules.



THE Apostle saith they haue vnspeakeable and glorious gladnesse and ioye, because it bringeth with it honour and glorie, when as the worlde hath suche ioye, whereof cometh ignominie and shame. Saint Peter speaketh here of true spirituall ioye more plainly then thou shalt reade almost in the whole Scripture: yet could he not fully utter & declare the same. Now, these things which haue bin saied are part of the preface, wherein the Apostle sheweth both what saith in Christ is, and also how the same must be proued and purged by aduersities and afflictions whiche God doth sende. It now followeth that this saith is contained and promised in the Scriptures.

10 Of the whiche saluation the Prophets haue inquired and searched, whiche prophesied of the grace that should come vnto you.

11 Searchyng when or what tyme the Spirit whiche testified before of Christe whiche was in them, should declare the suffrynges that should come vnto Christ, and the glorie that should followe.

12 Vnto whom it was reueiled, that not vnto them selues, but vnto us they should minister the things

Vpon the first Epistle

things whiche are now shewed vnto you by the whiche haue preached vnto you the Gospell by the holy Ghost sent downe fro heauen, the which things the Angels desire to beholde.



Ere Sainct Peter calleth vs to the Scriptures, wherein wee may see that God of his onely grace, and by no merit of ours performeth those thynges whiche he hath before promised. For hereunto tendeth the whole Scripture, that withstanding vs from al confidence in our own works, it maie bypug vs to faith: and verp needfull it is that we be very diligent in learning the Scriptures, whereby wee maie bee certein and thoroughly confirmed in faith. After the same sorte doeth Sainct Paule also call vs to the Scriptures, when as in the first Chapter to the Romanes, he saith that God had promised his Gospel afore by his Prophets in the holy Scriptures. Also when as he saith Rom. 3. that the faith whereby wee are iustified, was witnessed before in the Lawe and the Prophets. We reade also in the 17. of the Acts that he did the same when he preached of faith to them of Thessalonica, whō he called to the Scriptures and expounded the same vnto them: who also on the other side searched the Scriptures daily, whether those thynges were so or no which Sainct Paule did teach. This it behoueth vs to doe also, that those thynges whiche we reade in the newe Testament, wee maie learne to confirme out of the olde. Wherein wee shall see those promises concerning Christ, whereof Christ himself also hath admonished vs Iohn. 5. Search, saith he, the Scriptures for they beare witness of mee. And agayne: If ye did beleue Moses, ye would also beleue mee, for he wrote of mee. Those vaine tanglers therefore are not to bee regarded, whiche contemne the olde Testament, and presumptuously saie that wee haue no more neede thereof: when as notwithstanding out of it alone must be taken the foundation and ground of our faith. For to this ende God sent his Prophets to the Jewes, that they might re-

ceive

stike vnto them of Christe that was to come. Wherefore the
 Apostles did euery where conuince and resell the Jewes out
 of their owne Scriptures, prouing Iesus to be Christ. And
 for this cause the bookes of Moses and the Prophets are Go-
 spels, forasmuche as in them we reade the same thinges soe-
 tolde concernyng Christe, whiche afterwarde beynge doeu and
 accomplished, the Apostles did preache and write. This diffe-
 rence onely there is, that whereas the bookes of bothe were
 committed to wyting, yet is it (notwithstanding) not so much
 requisite that the Gospel of new Testament should be contain-
 ed in wytyng, as preached by the voyce, whiche maie openly
 publishe and sounde it forth, that it maie be heard euery where
 in the worlde. Now, whereas it was also wytten, that was
 moze then necessary. For whereas the olde Testament doeth
 speake onely of Christ to come, the Gospel is that liuely word
 and vocall preaching of Christe who is already come. Be-
 twene the bookes of the olde Testament, mozeouer this dif-
 ference there is: first the fve bookes of Moses are the summe
 of the whole Scripture, and are peculiarly called the olde Te-
 stament. Then are there Histories also and Bookes, wherein
 are described the deedes and diuers examples of them whiche
 obserued Moses lawe, and also of them which transgressed the
 same. Lastly there are Prophets, whiche haue plaine relation
 to the wytyngs of Moses, and haue moze largely and in plat-
 ner wordes expressed the same. Howbeit there is one and the
 same meaning both of Moses and of all the Prophetes. Now,
 whereas it is wont to be saied that the olde Testament is ab-
 rogated and reiected, it is thus to be understoode. First, this
 difference there is betwene the olde and newe Testament, as
 wee haue saied, that the olde signifieth Christe to come, and
 the newe doeth performe and exhibite present, those thynges
 which in the old were promised and by figures shadowed forth
 and signified. Wherefore those types or figures doe now cease,
 forasmuche as that is accomplished and performed whiche
 they did signifie, and that fulfilled whiche they did promise. Nei-
 ther ought there to be obserued hereafter any choyce of mea-
 ses,

Vpon the first Epistle

tes, apparell, places, and tymes: thei are all in and by Chyſte (to whom thei were referred) made of an indifferent uſe. For theſe obſeruaunces did not ſaue the Iewes, neither were they giuen them to this ende; that thei ſhould thereby bee iuſtified: but that thei ſhould by them (as it were) ſet forth Chyſt, who was to come.

Furthermoze, in the old Teſtament God had a double rule of gouernement: the one inward, the other outward. For he gouerned his people bothe inwardly in harte, and outwardly in bodie and externall affaires. Therefore did he giue vnto them ſo many Lawes, and ſo mingled one with an other. As where the houſebande might giue a bill of diuorcement to the wiſe, if he would not keepe her, but put her awaie from hym, it pertained to outward rule of regiment. But it belonged to Spirituall gouernment, whereas God commaunded them to loue their neighbour as themſelues. Howbeit, now he ruleth onely Spirituallly ouer vs by Chyſt: corporally & outwardly by the ciuill Magiſtrate. Wherefore, when Chyſt was come, that externall of outward gouernement was taken awaie: he doeth not commaunde vs to putte any moze difference betwene the outward perſones, tymes, or places, but doeth ſo gouerne vs ſpirituallly by his woorde, that wee are Lordes of all thynges that are without vs, and are bounde and tyed to no corporall thynges. But thoſe thynges whiche pertaine to ſpirituall adminiſtration of gouernment, are not taken awaie, but are ſtill in force, as are thoſe thynges whiche thou readeſt in Moſes, concerning the loue of God and thy neighbour. Theſe God will haue duely obſerued: for by the Lawe he will condemne all thoſe that doe not beleue. The figures alſo haue their place and ſenſe Spirituallly, that is, thei were Spirituall thynges which were ſignified by theſe outward figures: Which outward thynges are now taken awaie: as where the houſebande did reſuſe his wiſe for adulteries ſake, and put her awaie from hym: whiche was a figure, and had a certaine ſpirituall ſignification, whiche was afterward ſpirituallly fulfilled. For God did after the ſame ſorte reſuſe the obſtinate Iewes, whiche
would

would not beleue in Christe, and chose the Gentiles, whiche he dooeth euen yet also: prouidypng that when any refuseth to liue in the faith, he bee caste out of the Church of Christ, that he maie repent. After the same sorte is that constitution also, wherein it was ordeined, that a woman should bee married to the brother of her housebande beynge deade, and to bypnyng for the chyldren by hym, who must bee called by the name of hym that was deade, and possesse his substance. Albeit this bee now abolished, yet is it neuertheless a figure, whiche signifieth somethypng concernyng Christe. For he is our brother, who hath died for vs, and before his Ascension into heauen commaunded vs, that we should by the Gospel make soules (which are his sponles) as it were ppegnant and fruitefull: hereuppon wee retaine his name, and are named of hym, to whose mosse excellent riches we succede. Yet must we not boaste and saie, that we haue conuerted and wonne men: for all suche effectes must be onely attributed unto Christ. The same maie be saied also of other figures of the old Testament, whiche it were too long and tedious seuerally to rehearse.

Whatsoever then in the olde Testament, is not externall or outwarde, is yet in force and efficacie, as are all the saynynges of the Prophetes, concernyng Faith and Loue. Whiche Christ confirmeth, Matth. 7. Where he saith: Whatsoever ye would that menne should doe to you, euen so doe ye to hem: for this is the Lawe and the Prophetes. Howeouer Moses and the Prophetes are witneses of Christ beynge to come: So that if at any tyme preache of Christ, that he is our onely Sauour, I shall doe very conveniently, if takyng that place which is in the 22. Chapter of Genesis, namely: In thy seede shall all the Nations of the yearth bee blessed, I dooe therebpypon with a liuely voice inferre, that by Christe, who is that seede of Abraham, all men must bee blessed. Hereof now it foloweth, that in Adam we are all cursed and damnable, and that therefore it is necessarie, if wee desire to bee deliuered from damnation, that we beleue in that Seede. Upon suche saynynges as these, wee muste grounde our Faith, wherefore wee

Vpon the first Epistle

sought duely to regard, and reuerentlie to esteeme theim, inas muche as thei testifie and beare witness of Christ, so that our Faith maie bee established and confirmed by theim. And this is that whiche S. Peter doeth in the wordes followyng.

IO Of whiche saluation the Prophetes haue enquired and searched, whiche Prophetised of the grace that should come vnto you.



After the same sort saint Paule also speaketh in the last Chapter of his Epistle to the Romanes By the reuelation of the mysterie, whiche was kept secret since the worlde beganne, but now is opened and published among all Nations, by the Scriptures of the Prophetes: Many saynges thou maiest read in the newe Testament, taken out of the Prophetes, whereby the Apostles haue proued, that all thynges were so dooen and accomplished, as thei were foretolde by the Prophetes. For Christe Matth 11. rehearseth that sayng out of Esai: The blinde see, the halt goe, &c. None other wise, then if he would saie: Those things which ye there read written, ye see here truely dooen, and in verie deede performed. The same we read also of saint Paule, Actes 9. and of Apollos Act. 18. How thei couinced the Jewes, and proued by the Scriptures that Iesus was Christe: in whom whatsoever the Prophetes had foretolde, was now accomplished and fulfilled. Moreover Actes 15. the Apostles did after the same sorte shewe, that the Gospell must be preached to the Gentiles, that thei also might bee brought to the Faith. Bee assured that all these thynges, were therefore dooen by the common endeour of all, that the Jewes might be conuined, and as it were compelled to acknowledge, that all thynges were then so dooen, as thei reade them foretolde in the Scriptures.

II Searchyng when or what tyme the Spirite, whiche testified before of Christe whiche was in theim, should declare the sufferynge that should come vnto Christ.

The



He meanyng of salnet Peter is this: Albeit the Prophetes did not plainly knowe any certaine and definite tyme, yet generally thei did all signifye the circumstances, bothe of tyme and place, as howe Christe should suffer, what death he should dye, and howe the Gentiles should beleue in hym, so that by the signes whiche thei foretold, it might bee certainly knowne, that the same time was come. The Prophet Daniel came verie nere the matter, neuerthelesse, he spake thereof obscurely and darckly, namely at what tyme Christ should suffer and dye, and when this or that thing should come to passe. So thei had an vndoubted Prophecie, that the Kyngdome of the Jewes should cease before Christe did come, but the daie and certaine tyme, when the same should bee fulfilled, was not expressed, forasmuche as it was sufficiente to knowe, that when that tyme was come, the commyng of Christe was not then farre-off. So Joel in the second Chapter of his Prophecie, sheweth the time, when the holie Ghost should come: In the last daies I will powre out my Spirite vpon all fleshe. Whiche Prophecie Sainct Peter in the seconde Chapter of the Actes, rehearseth, and thereby proueth, that it was foretold of that his tyme, and those his brethren whiche then liued.

Hereby thou seest with what diligence, alwaies the Apostles rendered reasons of those thynges, whiche thei preached and taught, approuing the same by the Scriptures: but Corintheis and the Pope would doe all thynges with vs, without the Scriptures, commaundng vs by the obedience of the Church and vnder paine of excommunication to beleue the. The Apostles were replenished with the holie Ghost, & were certaine bothe that thei were sent of Christ, & also that thei did preache the true and vndoubted Gospell: yet did thei humble and submit them selues thus farre, that thei required to be beleued in nothyng, whiche thei did not proue soundlie out of the Scriptures, to bee so as thei affirmed: that the mouthes of Infidels might be stopped, and be able to saie nothyng against the wisdom. And shall wee beleue these grovells and vnlearned Livers,

Vpon the first Epistle

bers, whiche neither preache the Woorde of God, neither can doe any thyng but iangle and prate, haule and reuile? It could not be y the Fathers should thus erre, so long is it since it was so concluded, whereto of these thinges there ought now, no reason to be giuen to any man. We are able to proue certainly out of the Scriptures, that none shalbee saued, but he that beleueth in Christe, so that these men are not able to speake any thyng thereagainst. And also thei shall neuer bee able to proue vnto vs their childishe trifles by the Scriptures: as naimely, that he is in a damnable case, whiche saith not this or that daie, and suche like: wherfore it is not meete, neither ought wee at any hande to beleue them. Saincte Peter now saith mozeouer.

II And the glorie that should followe.



What whiche is here spoken of the Apostle, maie bee vnderstoode bothe of the afflictions whiche Christ him self suffered, and also of those which wee Christians being his members doe suffer. For sainte Paule calleth that the sufferpng of Christe, whiche euery Christian doeth suffer. As the affiance, name, worde and woorkes of Christe are myne (forasmuche as I firmly beleue in him) so are my afflictions also his, in asmuche as I am afflicted for his sake. Wherefore the afflictions of Christ are daily accomplished in Christians, euen vnto the ende of the worlde. This now is no small comfort vnto vs, that howsoeuer thinges fall out, wee are certaine, that all our afflictions are so common together with Christe and vs, that he counteth them no other wise then his owne. This also maie not a little encrease our comforte, that glorie shall vndoubtedly followe these afflictions. Howbeit wee must knowe this also, that as Christ came not vnto glorie before hee had suffered, so wee also must first beare the crosse with hym, that we maie afterwarde reioyce together with him. All thinges therefore, saith the Apostle in effect, whiche wee doe now preache, the Prophets

Prophets haue long since manifestly declared and testified
that they should come to passe; the holie Ghoste manifestlyng the
same vnto them. Now whereas wee doe foolishly understande
the Prophets; the cause is for that wee are ignorant of the
tongue wherein they did write: for they haue written very plain-
ly and manifestly. Therefore to them that are skilfull of the
tongue and haue the Spirit of God; whiche haue vnderstood all
that beleeue haue, it is not harde to understande them, for as
much as they know whereunto the whole Scripture tendeth.
But where bothe the tongue is not understood, and the spirit
is wantyng, it appeareth no other wise then if the Prophets
were made of wooden. For beinge if we should want either
of these, it were faire better to haue the Spirit without the
tongue, then the tongue without the Spirit. The Prophets
spake after an other sort then do the Apostles; yet do they
signifie the same thinges which afterwarde the Apostles pre-
ached. For bothe theye many thinges of the afflictions as well
of Christe as of those that beleeue in him; and also of the glorie
that followeth the same. So Dauid, Psalm 139, to heauens spea-
keth of Christ in this sort: I am a worme and no man; what
doth he els declare but his exceeding debasing with hanging
whiche in his passion hee suffered. And Paul apostle writeth of
the afflictions of Christians, saying: Wee are counted as
sheepe appointed to be slaine &c.

12 Vnto whom it was also the will that hee should the in-
selues, but who vnderstande not the things
which are now the world. And yet they
which haue preached vnto you the Gospel by
the holie Ghoste sent to you.



It was sufficient for the Prophets that they
knewe these things; but in that they set the
same behinde them in writing, it was for our
sakes; makinge themselves hereto as were
pintners, to etch the same in our hearts and
vnder-

Vpon the first Epist'e

vnderstandyng thereof, and that wee might learne the same of
them as of our maisters. And thus haue wee a sure helpe and
strengthenyng of our faith for our further and better instruc-
tion, whereby wee maie bee able to defende our selues against
all false doctrines.

¶ 12. Whiche thinges the Angels desire to beholde.



O greate thinges haue the Apostles desired vnto vs
by the holy Ghoste, whiche came downe vppon them
from heauen, that euen the very Angels doe desire to
beholde and see them. Here wee muste with greate attention
shut our eyes, and see what the Gospells, wherein surely we
can not but haue exceddyng delight, ioye and consolation. We
can not yet see these thynges with our bodily eyes, but wee
must beleue, that wee are made partakers of righteousness,
truth, saluation, and of all good thinges which God hath. For
inasmuche as he hath giuen vnto vs Christe his onely begot-
ten Sonne, the fountaine and head of all good thinges, how
shoulde hee not throughe and with hym giue vs also all his good
thynges, riches and treasures, whereat the Angels in heauen
doe take merueilous ioye and delight. All these thynges are
offered vnto vs by the Gospell: so that if we beleue, we must
needes likewise take merueilous delight and pleasure therein:
howbeit, our delight and pleasure while wee liue on the earth,
can not be so perfect as that of the Angels is. For here it begin-
neth in vs, so that by faith we haue a certein feeling thereof:
but in heauen it shall be so greate, that the hart of man is not
able to comprehend it, yet shall we enioye the same when we
come thither. Thus thou seest how Sancte Peter teacheth
vs to arme and prepare our selues by the Scriptures. For hi-
erbert hath described what it is to preache the Gospell: and
how it was foretold by the Prophetes, that it shoulde bee after
this sorte preached and taught. Now hee proceedeth and here-
after exhorteth vs by faith to embrace, and by loue to followe
such preaching of the Gospell, sayng:

13 Wherefore

13 Wherefore girde vp the loynes of your mynd;
bee sober, and trust perfectly on the grace that is
brought vnto you, by the reuelatiō of Iesus Christ;

14 As obedient children, not fashioning your sel-
ues vnto the former lustes of your ignorance;

15 But as he which hath called you, is holy, so
be ye holy in all maner of conuersation,

16 Because it is written; Bee ye holy, for I am ho-
ly.



His is an exhortation to faith, the meaning where-
of is this: Forasmuche then as so greate thynges
are preached and giuen vnto you by the Gospell,
whiche euen the Angels doe desire with pleasure
to beholde, see that ye faithfully cleaue vnto them, and with an
assured trust and assistance repose your hope therein, that your
faith must bee sincere and sounde, and not any fained opinion
or dreame.

13 Girde vp the loynes of your mynde.



Sainct Peter speaketh here of the spirituall gir-
dyng of the mynde, like as if a man should cor-
porally girde a sworde vpon his loynes. Of
which girdyng Christ maketh mention Luke
12. where he saith Let your loynes be girded
about. In some places of the Scripture, Loynes signifie car-
nall lust or concupiscence. But sainct Peter speaketh here of
spirituall Loynes. Whereas the Scripture speaketh of the
bodie, and calleth that part the Loynes, from whence from the
Father proceedeth naturall generation, according as we read
Gen. 46. that Christ should spring out of the Loynes of Iuda.
Wherefore corporally to girde the Loynes signifieth nothing
els then chastitie, as it is in Esay Chap. 11. Righteousnesse
shall be the girdle of his Loynes, and faithfulness the girdle
of his reynes: that is, by one faith, simple and vnlawfull lust

Vpon the first Epistle

is restrained and hydeled. But the spirituall giuynge where-
of the Apostle here speaketh, is after this sorte. As a Virgine is
in bodie chaste and entire, so the mynde throughe faith whereby
it is spoused to Christ, is spirituallie sounde and sincere. How
beit, as soone as it reuoltereth from faith to false and erroneous
doctrine, it is violatē and corrupted, wherevpon the Scrip-
ture commonly calleth Infidelitie and Idolatrie, by the na-
mes of adulterie and fornication, namely when the mynde
sticketh to the doctrines of men, and forsaketh faith in Christ.
From this Saint Peter here behoorteth, when hee biddeth to
Girde vp the loynes of the mynde, which in effect is as muche
as if he should saie: Ye haue now heard the Gospell, & attained
vnto faith: Ice then that ye perseist therein, and suffer not your
selues to be defiled & corrupted with false doctrine, wauering
in vncertaintie; now this waie, now that waie. The Apostle
saint Peter vseth here a certain peculiar and proper kinde of
speech, (not such as saint Paule vseth) when he saith: Gird
vp the loynes of your mynde. Hee calleth that the Mynde
which we other wise call the thought: as when I saie, I thinke
thus, that this is right, and as saint Paule saith, so dooe wee
thinke, such is our opinion, so it seemes vnto vs. And by this
meanes doeth the Apostle here moste properly signifie Faith,
meanyng thus much in effect: Ye haue now attained to a true
thought, and are settled in a right perswasion, that wee are iu-
stified by faith onely: perseist strongly herein, gird it fast vn-
to you and valiantly sticke thereunto, let no man pull these
founde opinions out of your hartes, and then shall yee prosper-
ously perseuer and stande.

There will many false teachers arise, who will forge doc-
trines of men, thereby to corrupte your mynde, and looze this
girdle of faith; wherefore in harte receiue this admonition,
whiche I giue you aforehande, that the Doctrine of Truthe
maie be well fixed in your mynde, and that you maie valiant-
ly perseist therein. Those Hypocrites whiche truste to their
woordes, and liue an honest and vertuous life, as it appeareth
outwardly, dooe verily thinke, and are fully perswaded, that

God

God muste needes receiue theim into heauen, because of their woozkes. This maketh them proude, presumptuous and glorious in their owne conceytes: As that Iharisey mentioned in the 18. of Luke, and wherof also Marie maketh mention in her song, commonly called Magnificat, where she bleth the same woozde, whiche thou readeest here in Saint Peter: He hath scattered the proude in the imagination of their hartes, that is, he hath ouerthrowne and brought them to confusion, in the deuises of their owne myndes and thoughtes.

13. Bee sober.



His Sobrietie perteineth outwardly to the bodie, and is an especiall woozke of Faith. For although manne bee iustified, yet is he not free from euill desires. In deede Faith hath begonne to restraine and hidle the fleshe, notwithstanding the same doeth continually strue against it, and assauleth it with sondrie sortes of desires, whiche goe aboute accordyng to the concupiscence thereof, againe to burst forth and preuaile. Therefore the Spirit hath daieily muche adoe, to hidle and restraine them: and it must therefore without intermission, haue continuall fight with them, and alwaies take greate heede of the fleshe, least that at any tyme, (suche is the craftinesse thereof) it vndermine and supplant Faith. By the premisses it appeareth, how farre thei deceiue theim selues, whiche bothe that thei haue Faith, and cōmpt that sufficient: liuyng in the meane season, accordyng to their owne lustes and desires. For where true Faith is, there muste needes bee an earnest endeuour to keepe the bodie vnder, and to holde it as it were with a hidle from outragynge and doyng what it listeth: herevpon it is that saint Peter here exhorteth vs to bee sober. Howbeit, he biddeth vs not as it were to destroye our bodie, or to weaken it more then is meete, as some haue doon whiche haue made theim selues mad by ouer muche fastyng, yea some haue quite pined and consumed theim selues a waie. In this

Vpon the first Epistle

sonde error for a tyme was saint Bernard, although he was other wise an holy man. For he afflicted his bodie with so great abstinence, that by reason of nō some breathe whiche hee gott thereby, no man could abide to stande neere hym, or bee in his companie. But hee was at length deliuered from this error, and willed his brethren that thei should not too much pine and pinche their bodies. For he well sawe that by that vndue abstinence, he had made himself unfit to serue his brethren. Wherefore Saint Peter requireth no more, then that wee be sober, that is, that wee doe so muche and so farre restraîne the flesh, as wee feele the wantonnesse and unrulinesse thereof to requite. Hee appointeth no certen tyme, as the Pope hath doon, how long wee must faste, but leaueth it to euery ones iudgement, so to fast that hee bee alwaies sober, that hee doe not so surcharge his bodie with ouermuche eatyng and drynking, but that he maie haue the perfect vse of reason, and knowe how to vse his senses aright, and how to liue profitably and beneficially to others in his vocation. For it is a very preposterous, absurd, and vnprofitable thyng, to giue a generall precept herof vnto the whole people, or to the Church: for asmuche as wee are unlike among our selues, one hath a strong bodie, an other a weakie, so that it is needefull for one to abstaine muche, for another to abstaine little, that the bodie maie neuerthelesse remaine in health, and bee fit to doe good workes.

Againe, there bee some that deale cleane contrarily, and thinke thei doe very well in fastyng nothyng at all: supposyng that thei maie without respecte of tyme, eate what thei will. But herein thei doe not well, for albeit thei haue some what tasted of the Gospell, yet haue thei profited little or nothyng, like vnto the sojner. For thei haue profited no further, but onely to contemne the Lawes of the Pope: Thei will not giue by their mynde and senses, as Peter here biddeth, neither do thei hide the desires of their bodie, that the sluggishnesse and lasciuiousnesse thereof maie bee repressed. It is good to faste, howbeit the right faste in deede is, to giue the bodie no more nourishment, then is needefull to preserve it in healtie: also

to

to exercise it with labours and watchynges, least this old Aste of ours, become moze wanton and lasciuious then is meete. Let hym bee restrained and bydded, and obedient to the Spirit, whiche Saincte Peter calleth here to bee sober. Not as some are wont to faste, who so excessiuelly engorge and pamper them selues with fishe, and the beste sortes of wine at one dinner, that thei make their beallies like a Tader or Drumme, with stuffing and crammyng them so full.

13. Truste perfectly on the grace that is brought vnto you.

Suche is Christian Faith, that with all assurance it whollie trusteth to the woorde of God, quietly committeth it self vnto it, and confidently attempteth whatsoever it teacheth. Whereupon S. Peter saith, then are the lopnes of the mynde girded vp, then is your faith sincere and sounce, when ye doe quietly and confidently commit your selues to the Woorde of God, and be bolde vpon trust therein: hauing no regarde whatsoever thyng of yours cometh into perill, whether it bee riches or good name, bodie or euen the life it self. Excellently therefore hath he in these wordes described a sincere and vnfeined Faith. For Faith must not be sluggish and sleepe, whiche is rather a dreame then a Faith, but it must bee liuely and effectuell, so that one would with all confidence offer him self to all afflictions and troubles whatsoever, and depende wholly on the Woorde, esteeming indifferently whatsoever state God sendeth, that wee maie patiently susteine aduersitie, as well as enioye prosperitie. As for examples sake: when I must dye, I must confidently commit my self to Christe, I must quietly offer my life for his sake, and trustyng to the Woorde whiche can not deceiue, I must boldly and couragiously triumphe ouer myne aduersaries. It is needfull moztouer that Faith should passe through, without declining any waie, and that it suffer it self to be hindered and terrified by no meanes, that it remoue frō the eyes
what

Vpon the first Epistle

whatsoever it seeth, heareth or feeleth. Suche a faithe doeth Sainct Peter require, whiche consisteth not in thinking and wooordes, but in mightie power, and effectuall vertue.

Further saith sainct Peter: Trust perfectlie on the grace that is brought vnto you, that is to saie, You haue not deserued this exceeding greate grace, but it is euentuellie offered and brought vnto you. For the Gospell whiche declareth and publisheth this grace vnto vs, we our selues haue neither deuised nor found out, but the holic Ghost hath sent it fro heauen into the worlde. And what thyng is it that is brought vnto vs? Forsooth euen the thinges whiche we haue afore mentioned. Namely, that who/oeuer beleueth in Christe, and cleaueth faste vnto his wooorde, hath together with hym, all the benefites and blessinges whiche bee his: in so muche that he is thereby, euen a Lorde ouer Synne, Death, Deuill, and Helle: and is in alle certainly assured of euermoring life. This is greate a treasure is brought home to vs, (as it were) to our owne doores, and lased by our holynes, without any our owne helpe, merite or deseruing, yea, euen vn hoped and vnlooked for, when we neither knewe of it, nor so muche as once thought of any suche matter. And therefore the Apostle exhorteth vs, that wee should boldlie and vndoubtedlie looke for this Grace, because that God, whiche offereth and bestoweth the same vpon vs, can not in any wise lye.

13 By the reuelation of Iesu Christe.



God offereth his Grace to none, but by Christ: and therefore without this Mediator, lette no man presume to come into his sight, as we haue afore admonished. For he will heare no manne, but hym that byingeth with hym Christe, his most deare Sonne, to bee his Advocate and Spokesman: as one, whom he onely hath respecte vnto, and for his sake, to all those that by faine cleaue faste vnto hym. And therefore he requireth at our handes, that we acknowledge his Sonne, as the

the persone by whose blood we are at one with hym, and now dare to present our selues befoze hym. For to this ende, came our Lord Christ, who taking flesh and blood vnto him, loyted hymself with vs, that hee might obtaine pardon, and purchase Grace for vs at þe hædes of his Father. By this saith in Christ were all the Prophetes and Patriarches saued. For it behooued all menne generally to beleue this promise made vnto Abraham: In thy seede shall all Nations bee blessed. And therefore the Jewes, Turkes, and all thei that repose any truste in their owne workes, hoppyng thereby to winne heauen, haue no faith at all in them. And therefore dooeth Peter saie: Grace is brought to you, but yet by the reuelation of Iesu Christe, or (to speake it more plainly) by this, that Iesus Christe is reuealed vnto you. In the Gospell it is shewed vnto vs what Christe is, that we maie throughly knowe hym, namely that he is our Saviour, that he taketh awaie our Sinnes, that he deliuereth vs out of all miseries, that he reconcileth vs vnto his Father, and that without any our workes, he doeth iustifie and saue vs. Who soeuer doeth not thus acknowledge Christ, is altogether deceiued. For albeit thou knowe hym to bee the Sonne of GOD, who died, rose againe and sitteth now at the right hande of his Father, yet hast thou not thereby throughly knowne Christ, neither shall this knowyng of hym any whit auaille thee: vnlesse thou proceede a stepp further, and bothe knowe and also beleue, that he did all these thynges for thee, to helpe, relieue and comfort thee. Vaine therefore are all those thynges, whiche hitherto haue been obruded, and preached vnto vs by the Schoolemen, insomuche as thei were without this knowledge of Christ: and entred commonly no further in consideration thereof, but onely to thinke how muche sorowe and greef our Lord Christ sustained in his passion: as though that now he sitteth idle in heauen, takyng no further care for vs, but ioynyng with hym self, whereby the peoples hartes remaine vncerly dyie, without the right vse of that heauenly dew, and water of their soules, so that no liuely faith can growe or take roote in them. Now, Christe ought not thus to bee pre-

Vpon the first Epistle

then, as that he liueth and raigneth for hym self, but that he is ours. For other wise, what neede was it for hym to descende into the woꝛlde, and to shedde his pꝛecious blood? Sith then he was sent into the woꝛlde, that by hym the woꝛlde might bee saued, as he hymself in the third of Iohn declareth, neede full it was, that he should accomplishe and perfoꝛme that self same thyng, for the whiche he was sent of his Father. For this woꝛde (sent of comyng) is not to be vnder stood of the diuine Nature of Chyste onely, but rather of his humaine Nature, and office whiche he bore and executed. Immediately after he was Baptized, he beganne to deale in this his office, and to doe that whereunto he was sent, and for whiche he came into the woꝛlde: Namely, to shewe and declare the truth vnto menne, that as many as beleued in hym should bee saued. After this sorte therefore, hee openly published hymself, woꝛkynge the meanes that he might be knowne, and offering Grace by his owne self vnto vs.

14 As obedient children.



Behaue your selues, as becommeth obedient chyldꝛen. Obedience in the Scriptures, signifieth faithe: but the Pope with his Doctoris Schoolemen, and Cloistered Diuines, hath with their Gloses mangled this woꝛde, and wrested it to the maintenaunce of their lyes and trifles, as they haue dooen whatsoeuer els is reade in the Scriptures concerning this obedience. As namely, that notable sayng. 1. Reg. 15. Obedience is better then Sacrifice: after that they sawe, how highlye Obedience was commended in the Scriptures, they haied and forced the same, as proper vnto theim selues, thereby to blinde the woꝛlde, and to byng menne into this error, to thinke that the Obedience so greatly commended in Scriptures, is nothyng els, then to embrace and allowe what soeuer they should enioyne and laie vppon theim. And by this meanes doe they drawe vs from the Woꝛde of God, to their
lyng

lying Legendaries, and Deuillish obedience. Whereas in deede, he is the obedient child of God that heareth the Gospell and woorde of GOD, and with faiche embraceth the same. Therefore whatsoeuer is not the Woorde, giue no eare vnto it, but rather stampe and tread it under thy feete.

- 14 Not fashionyng your selues vnto the former luses of your ignoraunce.

BE not of those maners that you were of before, neither haue you suche conuersation as asoyetyng you haue had: let no man see that life in you, whiche heretofore you haue ledde and liued. Heretofore you were Idolaters, and liued in luste, Surphette, Drunkenesse, Couetousnesse, Pride, Wrath, Enuie and Hatred, whiche was an euill and Heathenlike life, yea rather mere infidelitie: and in this desperate and sorrowne conuersation you walked, as blinde and ignoraunt, not wotting what you did. Now therefore put ye a waie these euill desires, Here thou seest how he imputeth all these mischeues vnto Ignoraunce, as vnto the Spring, out of whom thei procede and flowe. For where perfect faiche and true knowledge of Christ is lackyng, there can be nothing els then Errour and blindnesse: so that meene liue utterly ignoraunt what is right or what is wrong, and thereby runne headlong without stoppe or staie, into all mischeues and inconueniences.

After this sort hitherto haue wee been dealt withall, when as Christe was darkened, and almoste abolished and banished out of the worlde: when in steede of truthe, wee were nozzed in Errour, and in place of the sincere knowledge of the Truth wee were fast chained and clogged in Ignoraunce: in so muche that within a while this question was mooued and debated all the worlde over, how and by what meanes wee might attaine felicitie. This was an infallible signe of Blindnesse and ignoraunce, and that the sincere knowledge of faiche, was extinct and taken awaie. Whereupon it grew that the worlde was pe-

Vpon the first Epistle

stered with suche a number of Sectes, and all thynges toyne a sonder and disordered, while euery manne framed after his owne imagination, a peculier and seuerall waie for hymself to heauen. And out of this Cuill (sith wee are not able any waie to helpe our selues) wee can not choose but alwaies bee dyorned deeper and deeper, in the gappng gulphe of utter blinde- nesse. And therefore saint Peters woordes here are, as if he should saie: You haue long enough walked in foolishnesse, now caste the same awaie from you, as beeyng wise, and hauyng raught vnto the true knowledge.

15 But as he whiche hath called you is holie, even so bee ye holie, in all maner of conuersation:

16 Because it is witten, Bee ye holie, for I am holie.



Ere doorth Saint Peter alledge a place out of the old Testament, in the 19. of Leuitic: to where the Lorde saith, Bee ye holie, for I am holie: that is to saie: Because I am your Lorde and God, and you my people, meete it is, that you should bee as I am. For he that rightly and throughly plaiceth the parte of a Lorde in deede, bendeth his care to make his people like vnto hymself, dutifully in eche respect to behaue them selues towarde hym, and frame theim selues seruiceable to his will. Herevpon it falleth out, that as our Lorde and God is holie, so also should his people bee holie; and that is, when we walke in faith. Verie little mention is made in the Scriptures, of any Saintes or holie men departed out of this life, but alwaies in a maner it speaketh of those holie menne, that as yet were aliue: as the Prophet Dauid pronounceth himself holie in the 86. Psalm, sayng. Preserue thou my Soule Lorde, for I am holie.

But our smatterpng doctozlie Diuines and Schoolemen haue also misconstrued, & peruerter the true sense of this place sayng: that the Prophete hath a peculier reuelation, in that he calleth himself Holie: Wherein thei flatly bewzaie themselves bothe

bothe to lacke Faith, and also to be utterly vnacquainted with this reuelation of Christ: for if thei had any, thei might easely by the effect feele in them selues the power therof. For he that is a Christian, hath a feeling of suche reuelation in his conscience: and he that hath no feeling of it, the same is no Christian. For he that is a Christian, commeth into a Communion with Christ, and is partaker with him of all his goodnesse: and therefore saying that Christ is holie, his members must also needes be holie, or els deny that Christe is holie. For if thou bee Baptized, thou hast put on the garment of holinesse, whiche is Christe, as saint Paule testifieth.

This worde Holie, signifieth that whiche is onely proper vnto God himself, and to hym onely doeth it appertaine, the which we commonly doe call consecrated. And therefore doth saint Peter now saie: You haue consecrated your selues vnto God, and therefore it standeth you vpon so to looke to it that ye suffer not your selues to bee caried awaie againe into the vaine lustes and desires of this worlde, but giue you place vnto God, that hee maie raigne, liue and wooke in you, and so shall ye bee holie euen as hee is holie.

Thus hath he hitherto described the Grace that is offered vnto vs by the Gospell and preaching of Christe, and hath taught vs how againe we ought to behaue our selues toward the same, namely to persist and continue in a pure and sincere perswasion of Faith, being well assured that no worke whatsoever, that we either can doe or deuise, can any thing auaille vs toward our saluatiō: But where this doctrine is preached, then straightwaies reason commeth in and inferreth thus: If the case so stande, what neede haue I to doe any good worke? Then doe these grosse heads enter into this fonde opinion, or rather mere madnesse, making of a right Christian life a carnall licentiousnesse, deeming it lawfull for euery man to dooe what him listeth. With suche maner of persones doeth saint Peter here in this place meete withall, and by preuention taketh aforeshande from them that their foolish imagination teachyng vs that Christian libertie, without dependyng vpon

Vpon the first Epistle

any good woꝝkes is to bee vsed towardeſ GOD, becauſe on hym we are onely to build our Faith without any Woꝝkes: foꝝ hereby wee attribute vnto hym his due due honour, and acknowledge hym foꝝ our good God, who is bothe iuſt, true and mercifull. Suche a Faith as this deliuereth and offereth vs froꝝ our ſinnes and all other miſchæues whatſoener. Now, after that we haue attributed this vnto God, al the reſidue of our liues that we haue to liue, we are to beſtowe to the benefite of our neighboꝝ, to ſerue and doe good vnto hym. The very chee- feſt & principalleſt woꝝke of all others proceeding and iſſuyng out of Faith is, with our mouthes be readie to conſeſſe Chriſt, and with our bloud alſo to beare witneſſe vnto hym, and if the caſe ſo require to beſtowe our very liues alſo foꝝ his ſake. And yet hath not God any neede of this oꝝ any ſuch woꝝke of ours: but theſe foꝝe muſt wee doe it, that our Faith being thereby thꝛoughly tried and manifeſted, moie alſo drawe and allure o- thers to the like. Furthermoꝝe, there bee other Woꝝkes, whiche dooe generallie alſo ſerue to this ende, that wee maye thereby doe good vnto our neighboꝝ: all whiche notwithstanding, not wee our ſelues but God is hee that muſt woꝝke and byꝝing the ſame to paſſe in vs. Thus haue wee nothing at all in the woꝝlde of our owne, that wee can aſcribe in any reſpecte vnto our ſelues.

Whereby now it evidently appeareth, how farre of it is, that this preaching of the Goſpell doeth open any (yea neuer ſo li- tle) a windowe to liue carnallie; oꝝ that euery man maie law- fullie doe what he liſteth. And theſe foꝝe ſaith Saint Peter furthermoꝝe.

17 And if ye call him Father, whiche without re- ſpect of perſone iudgeth according to euery mans woꝝke, paſſe the tyme of your dwelling here in feare:

18 Knowyng that yee were not redeemed with corruptible thinges, as ſiluer and golde, from your vaine conuerſation, receiued by the traditions of the fathers,

19. Bus

19 But with the precious bloud of Christ, as of a Lambe vndefiled, and without spot.

20 Whiche was ordeined before the foundation of the worlde, but was declared in the laste tymes for your sakes,

21 Whiche by his meanes dooe. beleue in God that raised him from the dead, and gaue him glorie, that your faith and hope might be in God.



THE meanyng of saint Peter in this place is this: Ye are now by faith come to this point that ye are the Sonnes of God and be your Father. Ye haue attained an incorruptible inheritance, whereof hath bene spoken afore: now therefore there remaineth nothing behind, but that the veile being taken awaie, that may bee openly shewed which earst was hidden. This must ye yet expect and looke for, till the tyme come that it bee giuen you to see it. You therefore are come to this good point, that you maie with boldnesse and trust, inuocate and call vppon God your Father, because he is (neuerthelesse) iust, as he that will render vnto euery one without respect of persones accordyng to their workes. Let no man perswade hym self, for that he is dignified and emicled with this worthy name to bee called a Christian or the Sonne of God, that therefore God will spare hym, if hee liue without his feare: and accoumpt it enough because hee hath suche an excellent name. The worlde in deede iudgeth accordyng to respectes of persones, not iudgyng all persones equallie and indifferently, but spareth suche as bee their freendes, wealchie, riche, saye, learned, wise, mightie, and in high authoritie. But God respecteth none of all these, hee dealeth in all thynges with indifferencie, bee the persones neuer so high of calling. So did hee in Egypt slea the Child as well of the kyng, as of the poorest sheepeheard. Exod. 10. And therefore the Apostle here warneth vs that wee looking for the like iudgement should stand in feare, and not so to vaile
our

Vpon the first Epistle

our tittle because wee are called Christians, that therefore wee should presume that God will any whit more spare vs then hee will others. For this vaine perswasion long agoe deceiued the Jewes, who bragged them selues to bee the Seede of Abraham, and the people of GOD. The Scripture maketh no difference accordyng to the fleshe, but accordyng to the Spirit. Verie true it is that God promised, that Christ should be bozne of the seede of Abraham, and that out of hym should come an holie people: but it followeth not therevpon, that all they bee the childzen of God whiche descended from the ligne of Abraham. Wee also promised saluation to the Gentiles, but he saied not, that hee would saue all the Gentiles.

But here now ariseth a question. When we say that God doeth saue vs onely by faith without respect of good workes, how happeneth it that Saint Peter doeth here saie, that hee will not iudge accordyng to the person, but accordyng to euery mans worke? I answer. What soeuer wee haue taught concerning faith, how that it alone doeth iustifie vs before God, is without al doubt very true: forasmuch as the Scripture declareth and witnesseth the same more plainly then that it can bee denyed. Now, wherreas saint Peter doeth here saie, that God iudgeth accordyng to workes, that also is as true. But this by the waie muste vndoubtedly bee beleued, that where Faith is not, there neither can any good worke bee: and againe, that there is no Faith where there bee no good workes. Therefore thou muste byng bothe thy Faith and thy good workes into one, as in the which being bothe together, is comprehended and contained the summe of a true Christian life. As thou liuest therefore, so shalt thou receiue, and so will God iudge thee. And therefore although God iudge vs accordyng to our workes, yet neuerthelesse, this remaineth also alike true, that good workes are onely the fructes of Faith, whereby it shalbe easie to finde and trie where Faith is, and where is Infidelitie. And therefore will God iudge thee accordyng to thy workes, and will thereby laie it face to face to thy charge whether thou haue Faith or no. As no man can bet-

for confesse a Lye then by his owne wordes: And yet neuer thelesse it is plaine that by these wordes he is not made a Lye, but he was a Lye afore that he vttered any lye, because that a lye must needs procede from the harte into the mouth.

Take therefore these same wordes of Saint Peter in a moſte ſimple ſenſe, and in ſuch ſorte that you vnderſtande wordes to be the fruites and ſeales of Faith; and that God doth iudge men accordyng to theſe fruites, whiche can not but enſue and followe a true and ſounde Faith: to the intent it maie manifeſtly appeare, where Faith remaineth in the harte, and alſo where Infidelitie lodgeth. God will not iudge accordyng to theſe interogatories and queſtions: whether thou be called a Chriſtian or no: or whether thou bee baptized or no: but hee will thus queſtion with thee: Dirtha, if thou bee a Chriſtian, where bee thy fruites, whereby thou art able to confirme and approue thy faith.

And therefore ſaith ſainct Peter, for ſmuch as you haue ſuch a father, which iudgeth not accordyng to any mans perſon, ſee that yee haue your conuerſation in the tyme of your dwelling here, in feare: that is to ſay: Feare ye this Father, not in the feare of puniſhment and reuenge (for ſo the wicked reprobates and Deuilles doe feare hym) but feare ye hym, leaſt he ſhould forſake you, or withdrowe his holle hande from you. Euen as an honeſt and good child ſtandeth in feare leaſt hee ſhould offende his father or commit any thyng that ſhould not bee well liked of hym. Such a feare doeth God require at our handes whereby wee maye loathe and abhorre ſinne, and diligently ſtrive to helpe out neighbour to liue as hee hath liued in this worlde.

That Chriſtian that beleeueth well, is poſſeſſed of all the goodes and benefites of God, and is the child of God, as wee haue heard afore declared: but the tyme that hee here hath to liue, is nothing els then a kinde of Sequeſtration or Solitaryneſſe. For his Spirit by faith is already in heauen, by the whiche hee is euen a Lye of all thynges. But God therefore ſufficeth hym yet for a tyme to liue in the fleſhe and to bee con-

Vpon the first Epistle

uerfant in bodie vpon the earth, purposeles that he should help others, and bying them with him to heauen.

And therefore wee ought no other wise to vse this world, nor to make any other account thereof, but as Strangers or wayfaring men are wont to doe: who comming into their Lodgyng or Inne, make no further reckoning, but to haue at their Hostes handes, meate, drinke and lodging for one night and no longer: thei doe not chalenge and laie claime vnto their Hostes whole substance.

After the same sorte ought every one to account of his wealth and riches, euen as though thei were none of his: to take therof onely so much as is sufficient, for the maintenance and nourishment of his bodie, and with the rest to relieue and helpe his needie neighbours. Therefore the life of a Christian man is no other wise but as a mansion for one night. For wee haue here no permanent dwelling place, wee must haue our desire thither, where our Father is, namely heauen. And therefore, wee ought to abandon and laie aside all lasciuiousnesse and dissolute life, and to passe (as sainte Peter saith) the time of our dwelling here in feare.

18. Knowyng that ye were not redeemed with corruptible thinges, as silver and golde, from your vaine conuersation, receiued by the traditions of the fathers,

19. But with the precious blood of Christ.



His (saith he) ought to moue and stirre you to employe your conuersation in the feare of God, considering how great a price your redemption cost. Therefore ye were Citizens of the world, lying vnder the tyrannous rule of the Deuill: now hath God deliuered you from such lamentable and desperate conuersation, and hath brought you into another place, so that now you are Citizens in heauen, and but strangers and pilgrims on earth. But marke ye wel how

much

much God hath bestowed on you, and how invaluable and exceeding greates that treasure is wherewith you are redeemed, and brought into that happy case to become the childe of God. Therefore passe your time and conuersation in feare, and take ye good heede least if ye should conuerne and neglect the seuerages, ye looke this so excellent and precious treasure.

And what treasure is that whiche is so excellent and precious, wherewith wee are redeemed? Not these corruptible thinges, Golde or Siluer, but the moste precious blood of Christe the Sonne of God. This treasure is so excellent and of price so inestimable, that no sense or reason of man is able to comprehend it, insomuch that one small droppe of this most innocent Blood, had beene fullie sufficient for the finnes of the whole worlde. But it pleased the eternall Father so abundantly to poure out his Grace vpon vs, and with suche a price to procure and worke our saluation, that he would haue his moste deare Sonne Christ to shed all his blood, and to bestow and giue vnto vs all his treasures at once.

And therfore he requieth vs, that we doe not (as it were) cast awaie into the ayre or make small accompt of suche a greates Grace, but rather so to esteeme of it, that wee maie bee stirred and moued vnto feare: that liuing therein, wee maie not deserue euill to be depriued of this so surpassing treasure.

And this withall must diligently be noted and considered, how that saint Peter here doeth saie, that ye were redeemed from your vaine conuersation which ye received by the traditions of the fathers.

For by this, hee directeth the church to take that perswasion that wee are wont moste commonly to take, thinking that all our doings ought to be allowed and well liked of, because the same of an olde custome haue how long continuance, and because our Ancestours and predecessors (among whom there haue been many wise and good men) haue observed them.

Vpon the first Epistle

For thus hee saith: Whatsoever our fathers haue either enacted or done, all was ill: and consequently, those things that you haue learned of them concerning the worshipp of God, are so corrupt and naught, that God must be slowe the blood of his owne Sonne, to redeeme and free men from the same: Whatsoever now therefore is not washed away by his blood, is altogether by the flesh infected and accursed.

Whereupon it followeth, that the more earnestly that any man striveth to attaine to righteousness without Christ, the further of is he from true righteousness, and the deeper is hee plunged and bound in the gulphie dungeon of blindness and injurie, making himselfe guilty of this most precious blood.

Other grosse externall vices are in effect little to bee made account of, in comparison of this odious Sinne, that teacheth vs to attaine our iustification and righteousness by works, and which frameth a worshipping of God according to the imagination of mans idle braine and phantasie. For by this meanes that most innocent blood of Christ is dishonored, and most shamefully blasphemed.

Even as the Gentiles and Heathen people did farre more grievously sinne in honouring the Sunne and Moone, which they thought to bee the true worshipping of God, then they did in committing any other faultes which they were out of all doubt to be sinfull and ill too. And therefore humane iustification and righteousness is nothing els but a mere blasphemie of God, and of all offences that man is able to commit, the most heinous. And so those things that now the world embraceth and accounteth for the right worshipping of God and for the perfect waie to iustification, are accounted greater Sinne in the face of God then any other faultes whatsoever. Of the which sort, are the professed opers of religious Ceremonies and Rites; and whatsoever else hath any glorious glittering shew in the iudgement of the world, and yet neuertheless are cleane without faith.

And therefore whosoever he be, that by any other waie or meane, seeketh the grace of God, then by his Blood, hee is
were

were for hym neuw to come in the sight of GOD: as he that
with his owne biggerie righteoufnesse, doeth inuade and inuade
displease and offends his diuine Mestie.

19 As of a Lambe vndefiled and without spotte.



Herepon againe both Sainet Peter expounde
and interprete the Scriptures: For this Epi-
stle (although briefe and shor) is wonderfull ef-
fectuall, pure, and rich. So a little afore,
where he speaketh of their vaine conuersation,
in pursuyng the traditons of their Fathers, he did (as it were)
lightly touche sundrie places of the Prophetes, as namelie,
that place in the xxij. of Ieremie: The Gentiles shall be vnto
thee from the endes of the worlde, and shall saye, Surely,
our Fathers haue inherited Lyes and Vanitie &c. As though
he should saye, even the Prophetes foretolde that you should be
redeemed from the traditions of your Fathers.

After the same sort he here also leadeth vs into the Scrip-
tures, where as he saith: You were redeemed with the pre-
cious blood of Christ, as of a Lambe vndefiled and without
spotte. For here doeth he expounde that whiche is read in the
Prophetes and Moses: as that in the liij. of Esai, He was
brought as a sheepe to the slaughter: And the figure meane
in the xij. of Exod. by the Paschall Lambe. All these thynges
doeth he here interprete, and saith: This Lambe is Christes
who as it behooueth hym to bee without blemishe or spotte, for
also was he vndefiled and without spotte, whose blood was
shedde for vs.

20 Who was ordeined before the foundation of the
worlde, but was declared in the laste tymes,



We haue deserued nothing at all, ne yet so
much as euer desired this thyng, that the pre-
cious blood of Christ should bee shedde for vs:
and therefore there is no cause of matter here-
in, wherof we are iustly full of our selues

Glorie

glorie

Vpon the first Epistle

gloie or make any laudge: All gloie appereth: onely to
 GOD: who without any our merites, promysse, and
 manifested that, which from euertasting (when hee) the soli-
 dation of the worlde was saied) he had foreseen and foreordei-
 ned. And in the Prophetes were these thynges promised, but
 yet coueried: not plainlie and openlie, but now after the resur-
 rection of Christ, and sendyng of the holie Ghost, are openlie
 preached, and plainlie published throughout the world.

This is now the laste tyme, (as Saincte Peter saith) in
 whiche wee are: whiche from the tyme of Christs Ascension,
 continueth till the daie of the laste Iudgement. For so doe the
 Apostles and Prophetes call it, and Christ hymselfe termeth
 it the laste howre. For that the daie of Iudgement shall shortly
 approche and come anon, after the Ascension of Christ,
 but because that after this preachyng of the Gospell of Christ,
 there should bee none other: And that wee should not looke for
 any further reuelation, or more manifestation of Grace, then
 is now already reueiled and manifested. Heretofore, as daies
 one reuelation was shewed after an other: Whereupon in the
 vs. of Exodus the Lorde saith: My name Adonai have I not re-
 ueiled vnto them. For albeit the Patriarches knewe GOD,
 yet had they not suche a manifest declaration and preachyng of
 God, as afterward was published and sette out by Moses and
 the Prophetes. Now, there was neuer any preachyng heard
 of in all the worlde, notabler or more manifest then the Gos-
 pells wherfore it is also the last, as the whiche (after the course
 of those former tymes expired) is in this laste age reueiled vnto
 vs.

Furthermore also, accordyng to the account and com-
 putation of tyme, the ende of the worlde is not farre of, as S.
 Peter in his seconde Epistle and third Chapter declareth, say-
 yng: One daie is with the Lorde as a thousande yeres, and a
 thousande yeres as one daie. For his meanyng thereby is to
 call vs awaie from the carnall computation of this tyme, be-
 cause we should esteeme thereof, accordyng to the iudgement
 of GOD. Wherein certainly the laste tyme and small mo-
 ments

shall come: For that small tyme that to laste behinde remainyng, is with GOD as nothyng. Saluation is now reueiled and throughtly perfected: onely God suffereth the worlde thus still to stande and continue, to the intent he might be the more throughtly honored and glorified: albeit as touchyng hymself, he is so perfectly reueiled, that it is not to be looked for, that he shalbe any perfecter manifested.

21 For your sakes, whiche by his meanes doe beleue in God, that raised hym from the deade, and gaue hym glorie, that your Faith and Hope might bee in God.



For your sakes (saith he) is the Gospell reueiled. For God & his Chyl had no neede therof: it was doen for our healthe and saluation, to the ende that we should beleue in hym: neither haue we of our owne seluen strength and power so to dooe, but through Christe who maketh intercession into his Father for vs. Who was raised from the deade, that he might reigne ouer all thynges, in soueraine that he whiche beleueth in hym, hath all the good thynges that bee his: and by hym ascendeth up to the Father. And by this meanes haue we faile in God, and though this faile also haue, onely faile is it that must saue vs, but yet a sure and firme faile in God. For inlesse God beleeue thet thou shalbe sure neuer to remaine helpelesse, and therfore it is to be purposed, though all the men in the worlde doe neuer so muche fauour thet. The fauour of God is onely necessary, wherein thou mayest glorie. Whiche is the Father, and thou his Sonne: in whom thou receiuest fatherly confidence and trust, then in thy owne father and mother, and that he will in all thy necessities bee ready to helpe thee, euen for Christes sake our onely Redeemour and Saviour. Suche a faile as this cometh not of any humane nature, but GOD plaunteth in our hearts: for that Christes precious Blood deserueth and merites it, in whom thou mayest be with gr

Vpon the first Epistle

men this glorie; that being for his right hande, he by his di-
uine power might settle and rule a sure faith in vs.

Hitherto heretofore wee haue heard, how sainte Peter ex-
horteth vs first, to giue up the labours of our in ynde, and also
sincerely to walke in a perfect faith. Then considering how
beare a ynde this halcyon the Churche, that we should haue our
conuersation in feare: not bearing out selues both upon this,
that we are named Christiāns, such God is suche a iudge as re-
specteth no mannes person, one more then an other: but iud-
geth equally without any partialitie. Now proceedeth he fur-
ther, and exhorteth this first Chapter, sittinge

22 Seeyng your Soules are purified in obeying the
word which cometh through the Spirit, to loue brotherly with-
out feynynge, Loue one an other with a pure harte

23 Beeyng borne a newe, not of mortall seede, but of
trouthe and immortall by the worde of God, who liueth and

24 For all this the grace, and all the glorie of man-
kind is the flower of grace. The grace withereth, and
the flower falleth away.

25 Be the worde of the Lorde endured for euer, and
the worde which is preached among you.

Since I haue in the title to the Galath, rekeneth
up the fruites that follow faith. The fruites
of the Spirit, saith he, are Love, Joye, Peace,
Long suffering, Gentlenesse, Goodnesse, Faith,
Meeknesse, Temperance. So also here doeth
sainte Peter teach us to payne for the fruites of faith. To
write, to purifie our Soules in obeying the truth through the
Spirit: For where there is faith is it byunged the bodie in
obeying, and in subjection, and to let the iustice of the fleshe: and
although it make not a cleare conscience, and doeth be there-
of, yet it maketh the bodie subiect to the Spirit, and as with

a hyde, qualifieth the wilde motions thereof. The same mean-
 yng also hath saint Paule, where he speaketh of the fruites
 of the Spirit. It is a greate and basie peece of worke, to
 hyng the Spirit to Maister and beare rule ouer the Bodie,
 and to repress the wilfull affections, and fleshlie desires natu-
 rall engraffed in vs from our parentes. For it is not possible
 for us to liue well, no not in the state of Mledlocke, without
 speciall Grace: I saie nothing, what wee can doe herein, be-
 yng without Grace.

But why saith he, Purifie (or make chaste) your Soules;
 and not rather your Bodies? Surely he full well knewe, that
 the lusts and concupiscences of the fleshe, accompanie vs to
 our Graues, and are neuer quenched in vs (although wee bee
 Baptized) till our dying daie. Now, it is not enough for a
 manne to containe hymself from the acte doyng, and to be out-
 wardly chaste and a virgine, his harte in the meane while boi-
 luyng in filthy desires of fleshly lustes; but wee must earnestly
 endeavour our selues with all diligence, that our Soules maie
 bee chaste, so that this chastite maie procede, and come from
 the harte, and that the Soule maie bee a continuall enemye
 and warre with all naughtie desires, and still fight againste
 them, till it be cleare deliuered from them.

And it agreeth very well that is here added, that we must
 purifie our Soules in obeying the truth through the Spirit.
 Suche hath been preached and spoken of Chastite, and many
 Bookes haue been written concerning it. The Church
 whereof haue taught vs, with long fasting, abstinence from
 fleshe, wine and such like, to quench these filthy motions of
 concupiscence and lucre. Whiche although some what they hel-
 pen therunto, yet could they not be sufficient, neither could they
 beate downe the inordinate desires of the flesh. Saint Hieron-
 ymite of hymself, that he so punished and pinched his Bodie,
 that he was euen like an Ethiopiamper neuer beleefe, he so lit-
 tle therewith profited, that he many tymes dreamed he was in
 Rome, in company of Gentlewomen and faire Maidens.
 Bernard also so punished, and with such abstinence almost

Vpon the first Epistle

so spoiled his bodie, & it stonke loathsomely, as afoze I haue declared. These holy men were greuously tempted wth without outward thinges thei thought thei could restraîne and quench their temptations: but because the remedies whiche thei vsed were externall and outward, and were applied outwardly and not inwardly (where in deede the disease was harboured) thei could not serue as sufficient and able to master and kill those desires of the mynde, wth whiche thei warred. But S. Peter in this place sheweth vs a moste true and Soueraigne remedie wherewith to cure this euill, to witte, Obedience to the truche through the Spirit. Whiche the Scripture in other places also setteth downe, as in the 11. of Close: Faithfulness shall be the girdle of his reynes. This is the true Cataplasme, wherewith the Reynes are to be girded: whose soundnesse must proceede from the inner thinges to the outward, and not contrariwise from the outward to the inner. For the Sbare whiche we woude cure lieth, not outwardly in the kercher, or clothes, but being bredde inwardly, raging & raging inwardly in the Bloud, Fleche, Sparrowe and Veins. Therefore it is not the beste waie, wth outward thinges to goe aboute to repressse and quenche fleshy concupiscence: the bodie with fasting and labours may be brought into greate debility and weaknesse, and at length thereby be vnto marred, spoiled and brought vnto death, but to bee eased from euill desires it can not. But if altho is able to quenche them, and so to keepe them vnder, that thei shall bee brought to giue place and yeeld vnto the Spirit.

So also speaketh the Prophete Zacharie in his 9. Chapter, of wine, whereof Christ first drinkech, whiche maketh them maybens, to whom hee drinkech and feyrestech. The nature of other wine is wth to enkindle and stirre vp naughty desires: but this wine, to wit, the Gospell, represseth the same and maketh the harte chaste. And this is it that S. Peter here meaneth, when hee saith, where Truche is holden fast in the harte, and obedience thereunto giuen throught the Spirit, that that and none but that, is the truest cure & perfect remedie.

gainst this dangerous euil and mischiefefulnes which, there
 is none other that can be found so able to wryne a waile and qu-
 lifte these euill cogitations and haine thoughtes. For whē this
 remedie (the Gospell I meane) is entered and taken possesse
 within the harte, all naughtie leude motions do straightwaies
 giue place and vanishe a waile. Let hym that wil trie this mat-
 ter, and hee shall duely finde it so to bee, as all they that haue
 made triall thereof, doe very well know. But the Deuill doth
 not easely suffer any man to come to that point, as in harte so
 to embrace the Clothe of God, that he maie feelee what a good
 taste and sauour it hath: because hee knoweth full well, what
 great power and mightie efficacie is in it, to subdue and beate
 downe all naughtie desires and euill thoughtes. Therefore,
 that whiche saint Peter here speaketh, is as though he should
 thus saie: If you bee desirous to remaine and continue chaste, it
 standeth you in hande, to embrace and shewe your obedience
 to the truche through the Spirit: that is to saie, It necessari-
 ly behooueth you not onely to reade and heare the Clothe of
 God, but to embrace the same in your hartes. And therefore,
 it is not enough, that the Gospell bee once preached or once
 heard, but thou must continuallie cleaue into it and followe it.
 For, this grace hath the Clothe, that the finer a man tasteth
 it, the sweeter it still waret, and the pleasaunter it reliseth.
 For altho it alwayes teacheth one and the same doctrine con-
 cernynge Faith, yet can it neuer bee to the godlie and well dis-
 posed mindes sufficiently and enough heard. Now addeth the
 Apostle further,

22 To loue brotherly without faining.



What ende now must wee leade a chaste life: to
 the ende thereby to attaine Saluation? No, for
 sooth. But to the ende and purpose that wee maie
 serue and doe good to our neighbors. What shall
 I doe that I maie restraine and keepe vnder my sinnes? I
 must dutifullie obeie the truche in the Spirit, that is to saie,
 H. ij. the

Vpon the first Epistle

the Faith of the Word of God. And why doe I hide and keepe vnder subiection, my Sinnes? Forsoothe, that I maie dooe good to others. For I must first hide and ouermaister my bodie and fleshe through the Spirit, and then shall I bee able to profite and doe good to others.

22 Loue one an other with a pure harte seruently:

The holie Apostles Peter and Paule doe separate and make a difference betwene brotherly Loue and common Loue: a brotherhood is þ bond, wherein all Christians ought to be among themselves, euen as brothers, without any respect of difference: for why, we haue all in common, one Christe, one Baptisme, one Faith and one Treasure: I can not bee moze worthie then thou: that whiche thou hast, I also haue: finallye I am euen as riche as thou. Wee haue one and the same treasure, sayng that I peraduenture receiue it moze worthily then thou doest, as if I should laie it vpp in Gold, & thou shouldst kepe it in some filchy rag or vile cloute. Therefore, as wee haue the grace of Christe and all spirituall blessinges common together, so also ought we to haue our bodies, liues, wealth and dignities common one to an other, that one maie serue an others turne and necessitie in all thinges.

Now, hee verie significantlie saith, To loue brotherly without sayng, that is: without any gioling, hypocrisie or dissimulation: whiche terme and phayse the Apostles gladlie vse, for that vndoubtedlie they foresawe, that wee would not sticke to call one an other, Christian or Brother, and yet would falsly, secretly, dissimblingly and altogether hypocritically vndermine one an other. We haue erected in the world many fraternities and Brotherhoodes, whiche in very deede are nothing els then sturke vanities and mere deceiptes: altogether deuised, inuented & brought into the world by the Deuill himself. All whiche are whooly and altogether repugnaunt and contrarie to the Faith and sincere loue of Brethren.

Christe is as well myne, as hee is sainte Barnardes: thine

no lesse then he is S. Francis. When thou hearest any there-
foze saie: I shall come to heauen, if I be one of the Brother-
hood of this or that order, and were thou thus: It is mere pa-
trie and counterfayted hypocrisse that thou speakest.

Christe can not abide any suche trumperie, he can brooke
none other then a common Brotherhood, whiche we haue al-
together: and wilt thou plaie the notorious foole by breakyng
of that, to erecte and make to thy self any newe vsilart and pe-
culier Brotherhood.

This truly could I well abide, that thou shouldest erecte
one: but how? not whereby to make any peculier helpe to thy
Soule: but for a certaine number to come together, to contri-
bute and gather some treasure, for the reliefe of them that bee
in neede of it.

Therefoze all we Christians haue one Brotherhood, whiche
we tooke vpon vs in our Baptisme, of the whiche brotherhood
there is no Saincte that hath any moze then thou or I. For
looke with how greate a price he was redeemed, with so great
an I also bought and redeemed. GOD bestowed no lesse for
my sake, then for the greatest Saincte that is liuing: that he
peraduenture embraced this treasure better then I doe: That
is to saie, hath a steadfast and stronger faith then I.

Furthermore this woorde (Loue) hath a larger significa-
tion then Brotherline: because it reacheth also vnto our ene-
mies, and those especiallie whiche are not worthy of Loue.
For as faith sheweth forthe her woorkyng where she seeth
nothyng: so also ought Loue to see nothing: and there especial-
ly to exercise her operation, where there is in appaurance no-
thyng worthy to bee loued, but rather all thynges odious, and
suche as maye breede and procure loathsomnesse. Where there
is nothyng that can well be liked of, euen there ought the effe-
tes of Loue to shewe forthe: yea, this ought also to be doen fer-
uently (saith Peter) and with the whole harte, euen as God
loued vs, at suche time when wee were in euery respect moste
vntoworthy of his loue.

Vpon the first Epistle

23. **Receyving borne anewe.**

Birdie, al these thinges are therefore of you to be per-
formed and doyn, because ye are not now as you were
before: but you are (saith he) borne anewe, and there-
fore newe Men. This was not brought to passe through a-
ny your owne workes, but you needed a newe Birthe, for a
new man can not be brought forth by any power of his owne
into the worlde, but he must first be begotten and borne. What
Carpenter is able by his owne Arte to make a Tree, but the
same must needs of it self first grow out of the ground? Ther-
fore euen as we are not made, but borne the Sonnes and chil-
dren of Adam, and haue naturallly sucked Sinne from our Pa-
rentes: so neither shall wee by our owne industrie and labour,
euer become the children of God, but it belongeth vs by a kinde
of newe Birth and regeneration so to be. This therefore is the
meanynge of the Apostle in this place: Seeing therefore that
you are a newe Creature, it is verie meete and conueniente
withall, that you demean your selues after an other order,
and practise a newe kinde of life. As heretofore ye liued in ha-
tred, so now vse your conuersation in Loue, and let all thinges
be transposed and tourned after an other sorte. But how came
this new Birth to passe?

23. Not of mortall and corruptible Seede, but of im-
mortall and incorruptible, by the worde of God,
whiche liueth and endureth for euer.



Of a kinde of Seede wee are regenerated and
newe borne: no other wise then as we see, all o-
ther thynges to bee borne and generated of
Seede in their kinde. If therefore the old birth
proceeded and came of Seede, the newe Birth
also must needs be of some Seede. But what Seede is this?
Cruely not fleshe and blood. What then? Nothing that is cor-
ruptible and mortall, but euen the eternall and liuing worde.

This

This is all that, whereby we live, whereby we are nourished, and haue our being, and whereby specially (as he hath said) we are regenerated.

But how and by what meanes is this woorde to be doene, and brought to passe? Good tenderly but this hee sheweth vs in the Gospell, whiche rather seede into the hartes of men. If this Seede abide and take root in the hart, then is there presently readie the holie Ghost, who hath sowne a newe manie, whiche becommeth altogether of an other sort then he was a foze, hath other deuises, thoughtes and cogitations, other desires, and other wooles. And thus is he whollic and altogether altered. What forer thou askest, what forer thou askest, what thou puruest and seekest: what forer thou askest, what thou puruest and seekest. The state of Corporall generation is such, that the Seede whiche is in manne hath his alteration, and remaineth not still Seede: But the Seede of the Spirit is an no be changed, but remaineth one for ever: for namely altering & chaunging me, that I am transmutated and altered into it, and the corruption and dust whiche naturally dwelleth in me, is quite abolished. And therefore this is a wonderfull kinde of Seede, and of a mercurious Seede.

For all fleshe is as grasse: and all the glorie of man is as the flower of grasse. The grasse withereth, and the flower falleth away. But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.



His place is take out of the st. Chap. of Peter. Where it is noted into the prophet, One shall be raised, which shall live: To whom the same shall be raised, One shall be raised, and all the glorie thereof as the flower of the field. The grasse withereth, and the flower falleth away. But the word of the Lord standeth for ever. These words hath St. Peter here brought in and alleuied: For this Epistle is (as I haue shewed) and grounded upon the metaphisicall Scriptures.

Vpon the first Epistle

Scriptures. Now the meaning of the Scripture here allegorized, is this.

The woorde of the Loyde endureth for ever: But whatsoeuer is fleshe and blood, the same is as corruptible grasse. Bee a manne of neuer flourishing and gallant age, bee he neuer so riche and mightie, neuer so wise and iuste, neuer so haue, freshe and beautifull, all whiche appertaine to the flower: yet doeth the flower in the ende wither awaye, and that whiche in gallant age and beautie lately excelled, is wared olde, and become illsaoured: that whiche earst was riche, is growne to be poore: and so saye also all other thinges fade awaye, sauing onely the Woorde of God, whiche shene can neuer perishe nor decaye.

25 And this is the Worde whiche is preached among you



So though he should say: you neede not to seeke farre, how to come to this Glorde, for behold you haue it, euen before your eyes. It is that Glorde whiche wee preache vnto you: by this you maie qualifie and restraime all wicked desires. Thou needest not to seeke farre for it, onely looke to this, that thou gladly embrace it, when it is preached vnto thee. For it is sauerie vnto thee, that it maie bee heard. As Moyses also saith in the xxx. of Deuter. The worde which I commaunde thee this daie, is not farre of from thee, that thou shouldest neede to goe farre to seeke it: as either to goe vp to heauen, or to goe ouer the Sea to fetch it. But it is verie nere vnto thee, euen in thy mouth and in thy heart. It was straightwaies preached and heard, but when it hath frayed and broken full possession of thy heart, it can not any more dye and wither awaye, neither hope it suffer thee to dye, but sauereth thee so long, as thou stickest and cleavest faste vnto it. As when I heare how that Iesus Christ died for me, and bore all my sinnes, and purchased heauen for me, and also how he hath giuen all that he hath vnto me, now I see. I heare the Gospel and glau

glad thynges, I meane, the Woorde of God beyng preached, whiche peradventure quickly passeth a waie, and is forgottenne but if it bee effectually receiued with the harte, and that thou throughefully embrace hym in faith, then can not he any more slippe from thee, nor be forgotten. This trithe no Creature whatsoeuer, is able to ouerthrowe, the Gates of hell shall neuer preuaile againste it. Yea although I sticke faste in the Tawes of the Deuill, yet if I be able to take holde vpon, and to apprehende this Woorde, I muste needes bee bailed and deliuered thence, and shall remaine where the Woorde remaineth. And therefore it is not without good cause, that the Apostle here in effect saith, that there is none other Woorde to bee looked for, then this whiche we haue preached vnto you.

To this purpose tendeth that, whiche Paule in the firste to the Romaines saith: I am not ashamed of the Gospell of Christe, for it is the power of God ynto saluation to all that beleue. The Woorde is the Diuine and eternall power of God, For although the voice, sounde, or speeche, dooe quicklie vanishe and passe awaie, yet the kernell, that is to saie, the knowledge and trithe, contained in that voice, remaineth still. As when I putt a Goblet or Iugge of wine to my mouth, I drinke by the Wine, the Goblet or Iugge remaining still vnsent: So also þ Word which bring brought vnto vs by voice, descendeth into the harte, and there becometh to haue life: the voice remainyng still without, and vanishing awaie. And therefore it is well tearmed the power of GOD, yea rather God hymself. For so he saith vnto Moses, Exod. iiii. I will be in thy mouth. And in the lxxxj. psalme: Open thy mouthe wide: that is, shewe for the boldie, speake out, bee an hungred and I will fill it, I my self beyng present with thee, will speake enough. So also Christe in the xiii. of Ihon saith: I am the waie, the trithe and the life, he that cleaueth thereto, the same is boyne of God. Therefore this Seede is the Lorde our God hymself.

All which thynges serue to this end, to instruct and teache vs that wee can not possibly bee relieued and holpen by woord.

Vpon the first Epistle

kes: and the Woorde (be it neuer so small a thyng in shewe,
when it is vttered out of the mouth, and in apparaunce seeme
nothyng glorious and honorable) yet is there in it, a kinde of
suche incomparable vertue and force, as maketh so many the
children of God, as faithfully cleaue thereunto. Iohn .1. Ap^{ls}
suche an excellent state and goodnesse, leaue our saluation.

This is the first Chapter of this Epistle, wherein thou
seest with what singular Arte and cunningg saint Peter han-
dleth and preacheth faith. Whereby it manifestly ap-
peareth that is Epistle is the very Gospell or glad

Typpnges it self. Now followeth next the
second Chapter. wherein he teacheth
vs how we ought to behaue our
selues in our workes and
dealings towards
our Neighbour.



The

The seconde Chapter.



Herefore, layng aside al maliciouſneſſe
and all guile, and diſſimulation, and en-
uie, and all euill ſpeaking.

2 As newe borne babes deſire that
ſincere milke of the worde, that ye may
growe thereby,

3 If ſo bee that ye haue taſted how
bountifull the Lorde is.

4 To whom commyng as vnto a liuing ſtone diſalowed
of men, but choſen of God and precious,

5 Ye alſo as hvely ſtones, bee made a ſpirituall houſe, an
holy Prieſthood to offer vp ſpirituall ſacrifices acceptable to
God by Ieſus Chriſt.

6 Wherefore alſo it is contained in the Scriptur, Behold,
I put in Sion a chiefe corner ſtone, elect and precious, and he
that beleeueth therein, ſhall not be aſhamed.

7 Vnto you therefore which beleeue, it is precious: but
vnto them which be diſobedient, the ſtone which the buil-
ders diſalowed, the ſame is made the head of the corner,

8 And a ſtone to ſtumble at, and a rocke of offence, euen
to them which ſtumble at the worde beeyng diſobedient,
vnto the which thyng they were euen ordeined.

9 But ye are a choſen generation, a royall Prieſthood, an
holy nation, a people ſet at libertie that ye ſhoulde ſhewe
forthe the vertues of hym that hath called you out of dark-
neſſe into his merueilous light,

10 Which in tyme paſt were not a people, yet are now
the people of God: which in tyme paſt were not vnder mer-
cie, but now haue obtained mercie.

11 Dearly beloued, I beſeche you, as ſtrangers & pilgrims,
abſteine from fleſhly luſtes, which fight againſt the ſoule,

12 And

Vpon the first Epistle

12 And haue your conuersation honest among the Gentiles, that they which speake euill of you as of euill doers, maie by your good woonkes which they shall see, glorifie God in the day of visitation.

13 Therefore submitte your selues vnto all maner ordinance of man for the Lordes sake, whether it bee vnto the King, as vnto the superiour,

14 Or vnto gouernours, as vnto the that are sent of him, for the punishment of euill doers, and for the praise of them that doe well.

15 For so is the will of God, that by well doying ye maie put to silence the ignorance of the foolish men,

16 As free, and not as hauyng the libertie for a cloake of malicioufnesse, but as the seruantes of God.

17 Honour al men: loue brotherly fellowship: feare God: honour the Kyng.

18 Seruants, bee subiect to your maisters with all feare, not onely to the good & courteous, but also to the froward,

19 For this is thankeworthie, if a man for conscience toward God endure griefe, sufferieng wrongfully.

20 For what praise is it, if when ye bee buffeted for your faultes, ye take it patiently? but and if when ye doe well, ye suffer wrong and take it patiently, this is acceptable to God.

21 For hereunto ye are called: for Christe also suffered for you, leauyng you an ensample that ye should follow his steppes:

22 Who did no sinne, neither was there guile founde in his mouth,

23 Who when he was reuiled, reuiled not againe: when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed it to hym that iudgeth righteously.

24 Who his owne self bare our finnes in his bodie on the tree, that wee beyng dead to sinne, should liue in righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

25 For ye were as sheepe goyng astray: but are now returned vnto the shepherde and bishoppe of your soules,

Here



He becommeth he to teache vs, the right works of a Christian life & the true fruites of the same. Wee haue oftentimes also shewed that in these two thinges, Faith & Loue towards God, and Loue towards our neighbour, doeth consist and is contained the whole life of a Christian. Also, that this Faith of Christ is not giuen to any, but that there remaine (neuertheless) in our flesh (so long as wee here liue) many naughty concupiscences, lustes and desires: suchins that none here in this worlde can be so holie, but that he liueth in the flesh, and whatsoeuer is in the flesh, the same can not be perfectly cleane. Therefore saith saint Peter, be ye so instructed that ye may abstaine frō the sinnes which as yet adhere, and cleaue vnto you; and against them see that ye continually fight: for those be the most dangerous and most pernicious enemies that we haue, which lye within our owne bosomes: and in the midst of our flesh and blood dooe watche, sleepe and liue with vs, as it were some troublesome Guest, of whom (when a man hath once harboured and taken hym into his house) he can not againe be ridde. Therefore, seeing that Christ through Faith is all and wholly yours, and that you bee now possessed of his sauing healthe and all other his benefites and graces, knowe ye now that this charge and buetie lyeth vpon you, that you laie aside all malicioufnesse, or whatsoeuer is euill, & all guile, that is, that none deale with an other unfaithfullie and dissimblinglie, let there not bee seene any falshood in fellowshippe among you (as the prouerbe is) neither any craft and treacherie, whiche (God bee knoweth) is now aduaies too rife. But as it becommeth vs that bee Christians, in all poyntes towards God to deale, not feinedly and crookedly, but directly, sincerely and with a pure harte: so also towards men, it is our partes to deale plainly, simply and iustly, that no man ouerratehe or vndermyne an other, in buying, selling, or suche like.

So saith saint Paul, Ephes. 4. Put awaie lying, and let every man speake truthe vnto his neighbour. The truthe is this, that your speeche bee, yea yea, and naye naye. Dissem-

Vpon the first Epistle

bling is, when one sheweth him self an other maner of man outwardly, then he is inwardly in minde affected. It becometh therefore and is required of euery man, that he beare and shew hym self suche outwardlie, as hee is in deede and in harte inwardlie.

A Christian ought so to liue, that he maie not care though all men see and knowe what he thinketh in his harte: as he that in all his conuersation and life seeketh nothyng els but to glorifie God, and to be seruiceable vnto his neighbour: not fearing any man at all. For euery one ought to shewe hymselfe suche an one in the vertie secretes of his minde, as he is outwardly accounted: and not vnder the visor of honestie to deceiue and blear the eyes of the people.

Saint Peter further saith, that wee must also laye aside Enuie, and euill speakings. Wherin hee doeth very apellie and well repproue those vices that among men are vsuall and common in their mutuall traffiques and dealinges. This vice of euill speakyng, is a sinne now adates very common, and rife, quickly slipped into, and sooner committed then a man would weene. Therefore take heede to your selues (saith he) of this fault, yea although ye haue the Spirit: to the intent that ye maie by pproofe know what be the fructes of the Spirit.

- 2 As newe borne Babes desire the sincere milke of the worde, that ye maie growe thereby.



Hee hee byyngeth in a similitude, and his meaning thereby is this: ye now are newe borne by the worde of God, and therefore so behoue your selues, as newe borne Babes are wont to doe: that is: thei desire and couet after nothyng but Milke. As thei therefore desire the Dugge and Milke, euen so ought ye to desire the Woorde, and to haue your whole delight in the same: accompyting that all delicacies and dainties are therein readie for you, so lōg as you may sucke that Milke whiche

whiche is sincere and without deceipt.

Againe, these wordes bee figuratiue. For he speaketh neither of bodily Milke, neither of any corporall kinde of sucking, nor yet of any naturall birthe and natiuitie. But hee speaketh here of an other kinde of Milke, whiche is Spirituall, whiche is drawen by the Soule, & sucked with the Hart. This Milke ought to bee without deceipt, and not guilefull, as it many tymes nowadaies happeneth & much paltring and deceiptfull wares are retailed and vttered in sale. Truly it is moste necessarie that Christians beyng new Boyne and yet Infantes, should be nourished with sincere, pure, and perfect good milke. Now, this Milke is nothyng els then the Gospell, whiche is the Seede whereof we be conceiued and newe boine, as afore we declared: the same also is our meate, wherewith (after we be come to growth, we are fedde: it is also our Armour wherewith we bee fenced, cladde and armed: and to speake all at once, the self same Gospell is all thynges vnto vs. Now, what soeuer is thereunto myngled or corrupteth and infecteth the sinceritie thereof, is the doctrine of men. Therefore doth the holie Ghost here warne vs, that euery one of them whiche bee regenerate and newe boine in Christ, should carefullie looke about hym, and take heede what Milke he sucketh, and learne to bee able to iudge of euery doctrine.

The Dugges or Teates, distilling and draynyng out this milke, and out of whom Infantes doe sucke, are they whiche preache and teache the pure Worde in the Church of Christ. So speaketh the Bridegroom to his Spouse in the Cantie. Chapter .4. Thy two Breastes are like two twinnes of yong Roes. Betwene these ought there to hang a biddell of Myrre, as the Spouse there saith Cantie. I. A bundell of Myrre is my Louer vnto mee, whiche lyeth betweene my breastes. The meanyng whereof is, that Christ onely is alwaies to be preached. This Bridegrome alwaies ought to lye in the middle betweene our breastes. Otherwise, if Christ be not purely preached, the Milke is corrupted, and all thynges are preposterous, noysome and contagious.

Truly

Vpon the first Epistle

Purely preached I call that, when it is first taught, hold that Christe hath dyed for vs, and by his death hath rescued and redeemed vs from Synne, Death and Hell: this doctrine is in hearing very pleasant, and like as it were sweete Milke. But withall, anon after must the Crosse also bee preached, to wit, that wee must euen so suffer as he hymself hath suffered: this is a vehement strong drinke and mightie Wine. Therefore to suche as are but newly worne and begotten in Christe, gentle meate (that is to saie) Milke must bee first giuen: whiche can no waie be so conveniently doon, as first and for most by preaching and shewing vnto them Christe: who is nothyng at all sharpe and bitter, but rather euen sweetene he it self both pleasant in relishe and toothsome in taste, without any manner of harshnesse, or harme. And this is that very sincere and spirituall Milke, without all deceiufulnesse.

And here againe hath saint Peter by Milke, comprehended and glauced at other places of Scripture, as his order and custome is often and very plenteously to doe: namely that in the 23. of Exod. and Deut. 14: The Lorde gaue this commandement, saying: See that thou seest not a Kidde in his mothers Milke. For what purpose I praye you, willed God this to be written? what matter is there in it, that a Kiddy must not bee killed, so long as it sucketh? Doublelesse, for none other cause, but to signifie the same thyng whiche saint Peter here teacheth. For it is nothyng els, then if hee should saie, Lookes that ye preache gently and softly to those Christians that bee as yet Infantes and Weake linges, let them be well fedd, and sated in the knowledge of Christe, overcharge them not with strong learning, for their weakenesse and age can not alwaie with it, nor yet digest it. But after that thei bee grown and wares strong, then see them to bee killed and sacrificed with the Crosse.

The same sense and meaning hath that Lawe whiche we reade Deuter. 24. That a man takyng a newe wife, shall not be compelled to goe a warfare the first yeare, least he should be slaine, but shall be free at home and reioyce with his new wife

wife which he hath taken. Whereby assuredly there is none other thing ment, but that wee are to allowe and grante vnto those that as yet be children in the Schoole and faith of Christ, their convenient tyme and space to grow vp: and in the meane season that we ought to deale with them and handle them gently and curreously: whom afterwarde being wared strong, and of sufficient growth, the Lorde will bring to the Crosse, and make to be slaine as he doth other Christians. And then is the kinde killed.

Whereby ye maie growe; if so bee ye haue tasted how bountifull the Lorde is.



Thus sufficeth not once onely to haue heard the Gospell. It must continually bee inculked, that we may dailely thereby growe, & accordingly as we see one endued with strengthe of faith, so ought he to be prouided for, and so to bee ferued. Nowe do not thinke that this is spoken of ment, to such as yet haue not heard of the Gospell: for they neither knowe what it is, nor what it line meaneth. Therefore ended he these wordes, If so bee you haue tasted how bountifull and gracious the Lorde is. As though he should saie: He that hath not tasted this geare, to hym is it neither yet reueled with the harte, neither hath it any pleasure or sweete salour. But they that haue tasted it, yee long after it, and are euer desirous of this meate to theim the Woorde relissheth and saoureth, euen as it is in deede, and of theim is it with wonderfull sweetenesse receiued and taken.

And this I call Tastyng, when I dooe with my very harte beleue, that Christ hath giuen himselfe vnto me; and that I haue my full interest in hym; that he beareth and susteyneth for all my finnes, transgressions and harmes, and that his life is my life. When this perswasion is thoroughly settled in my harte, it yeeldeth wonderfull and incredible good taste. For how should not I herewith bee euery waye filled with ioye and pleasure,

Vpon the first Epistle

pleasure, feeling I am so glad and so ioyfull of a small tempo-
rall commoditie, as if a freinde should giue vnto me but onely
an hundredth partes of gold: But he that feeleth no tast of this
thing in his harte, can not hercof conceiue and take any ioye or
pleasure. Furthermore, thei beste taste these thynges that are
drawyng nere to the agonies of Death, or are any waie dis-
quieted with remorse of conscience. In those cases, hunger is
(as the Prophet saith) the beste sauce, those pinches maketh
this meate meruailous sauorie. For the harte and conscience,
when thei once beginne to haue feeling of their miserie, and
wretched state, can heare nothing that is so pleasaunt as the
Gospel: thei whollie rely vnto it, thei smell afaire of the deli-
cacie and toothsomnesse thereof, and can not bee fullie satisfie
therewith. So was the song of the blessed virgine Marie, He
hath filled the hongrie with good things: In the meane sea-
son, those wise mynded persons, that trust to their owne holi-
nesse, and leane to their owne woorkes and righteousnesse,
haue neither any feeling of their Synnes and wickednesse,
neither enioye any part of these thynges here spoken of. As for
example: when any that is hungrie sitteth at a table, or the kinde
of meate saoureth well, and hath a good relishe in his mouth,
whereas to hym that is full stomacked, nothing saoureth well,
but all meates; yea the beste and daintiest dishes seeme loath-
some. Therefore useth the Apostle these wordes, If so be that
you haue tasted how bountifull the Lorde is, as though he
should saie, If you haue not as yet tasted this, my preaching
to you is but in vaine.

4 To whom comyng as vnto a liuyng stone.

Ere againe, taketh he holde of **Scriptures** afore-
written, and hymneth in the psalm, of **David**, saying
thus: Heare the wordes of the Lorde, ye mockers, be-
cause ye haue said: wee haue made a covenant with Death,
and with Hell are wee at an agreement, and haue made fals-
hood your refuge: Therefore thus saith the Lorde: Beholde

I will laie in Zion a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious corner Stone, a sure foundation &c. This place doth sainte Paul also alledge, and it is one of the principallest places of the Scripture. For Christe is that precious Stone, whom God hath laied for the foundation, and vpon whom wee are to bee builded. And here beholde how S. Peter taketh these wordes and interpreteth them of Christ. Again, that which Elsie calleth Trulyng in hym, that saith S. Peter to be the same, that to bee builded vpon hym, is: And this is, truly and aptly to expounde the Scriptures. Thei that builde, laie their foundation in suche a place, where it maie continue faste and remaine firme, so that it may beare vp the whole house and frame that is builded vpon it: And such is doch this liuyng Stone, which is Christ, vphold and beare all this spiritual building. And to be builded vpon hym, is nothyng els, but that we all together repose our trust, confidence and hope whiche wee haue in our selues, whollie vpon hym.

4 Disallowed of men, but chosen of God & precious.

Here againe he allegeth a place out of the Cxxij. psalme of the Prophete David: The same Stone whiche the builders refused, is become the hedde Stone of the corner; and it is merueilous in our eyes. Whiche place Christ hymself ascribeth in the xxi. of Mathewes Gospell: and is repeted in the fourth of the Actes: The Stoie whiche you builders reiected and set nought by: Pon (saith he) are the builders. For thei taught the people, preached many thynges, enacted sundrie ordinaunces and Lawes, but thei made men nothyng thereby but Hereticmangers & Hypocrites. Wherevpon Christe pronounceth sentence vpon them, calleth them plaine Hypocrites, and the generation of Pharisees, and pronounceth many terrible sentences vpon them, recknyng them among Synners, and not for suche greate holle men, as thei would faine haue seemed. This can thei not abdoe, but reiect hym and saie. Hereticke, forbidest thou to doe good

Vpon the first Epistle

woorkes: Thou shalt dye the death for thy so saying: And therefore saith saincte Peter herer: This same corner Stone, vpon whiche you must be builded, is euen likewise refused and set at naught. This (as the Prophet saith) appeareth inuiscible in our eyes, and seemeth verie straunge, and so wonderful, that vntill the Spirit did teache it vs, no man by reason could conceiue it. Therefore (saith he) before God this Stone is chosen and precious, and of so high price and value, that it taketh awaie Death, recompenseth for Synnes, deliuereth from Hell, and laste of all, giueth also vnto vs the Kingdome of Heauen.

3. Ye also as liuelle Stones, be made a spirituall house.

How and by what meanes are wee builded: Euen by the Gospell and preaching of the Gospell. The Builders are they that preache: They that are builded, are suche Christians which heare the Gospell: & they are the Stones whiche must be laid and touched vpon this corner Stone so, that wee repose our whole truste vpon hym, and that our harte leane duely vpon hym, and so bee at reste. Now it followeth, that wee must so directe and frame our selues, that wee maie expresse, the life forthe and imitate that course of life that he ledd, For it is verie meete, that I who am builded and laid vpon hym by faith, should frame my selfe to the same woorkes that he did, and thus we forsh the same conuersation: Which order all menne generally and specially, ought and are bounde, to resemble. And this sheweth forth how proceedeth first faith, and is the woorkes of a man, that we should mutuallie bee mortified and inyned one into another, that we all together maie make one building. The same reason hath saint Paul also, 1. Cor. iii. Howbeit not altogether after the same manner that this is. You are (saith he) the Temple of God: It is not the materiall house, made of wood and stone, which is his House: a spirituall house is that whiche he requirerth, whiche is the Church of Christe, in whiche wee are all throught one faith e quall:

equall: That whiche one is, another is: all builded together
with in our selues mutuallie, and among our selues cemented,
couched, framed, and knitte together by a loue, without al ma-
liciousnesse, guile, hypocrisie, enuie, and euill speaking, as a
foze hath been declared.

3 An holic Priesthood.

Here taketh he auaie that outward and corporall
Priesthood, whiche was in the old Testament, as al-
so that outward Temple: all whiche he quite tempo-
nereth, and saith thus: That outward and externall pompe of
Priesthoode is now cleane ceased: now therefore beginning pe a
newe Priesthoode and offer other sacrifices, but so, that all
thynges be spirituall. Here haue we had somewhat adoe, for
that wee haue maintained and affirmed; that these persons
whiche commonlie of late yeres haue been called, and termed
by y name of Priestes, are not Priestes before God at all: and
that assertion proued we chasie out of this place. And there-
fore vnderstande it aright, and heare it well in mynde. That if
any should bee so wilfull in suche sorte, to weake and teare in
peeces (for I will not call it expounde) this place, as that the
same were to be meant of a double Priesthoode (whiche some
blusteringly and boldly haue asserted) that is to witte, bothe
of a spirituall and also of a corporall Priesthoode, will hym
to cleare his eyesight, and a little better to awake his senses.
For saint Peter saith thus. Be ye builded into a spirituall
holie Priesthood. Now, demaunde of these corporall prie-
stes, whether they be holie. And shall their life quickly declare,
as it is already openly known to all the worlde, how miser-
ably and desperately this laide cable of the, is euerydaye in
Carrouselles, in a nile, and in al other greete enormities. He
that is imbedded in this Priesthood, whereof is here spoken, he
needes muste bee holie: and he that is not holie, hath nothyng
to doe then this Priesthood. Thereby it appeareth that Saint
Peter in this place speaketh of one ordie, and the same a true

Vpon the first Epistle

and spiritual Priesthood.

Againe, we will aske the same question, whether in this place, S. Peter make any distinction or difference, betwene persons Spiritual & persons prophane: as continually now adaires the Priestles, are tearmed Spiritual, & the rest of Christians called prophane. And thei shal euen (will thei, nill thei) be driuen to confesse, that sainte Peter here in this place, speaketh vnto all Christians, and namely to them whiche ought to be like all Caliciousnesse, Guile, Dissimulation, Enuie and euill Speakynge: and to be as newe boine Babes, and to sicke this same sincere Pilke. Behold, how a lye doeth rightly and frankly conuince it self. The case therefore standeth very cleare, for so muche as sainte Peter speaketh vnto all that be Christians, and the truthe is manifestly shewed so the by it self, how that these falsifying Priestles doe vnto thei, and that sainte Peter speaketh not so muche as one worde of that Priesthood of theirs, whiche thei them selues haue framed and deuised, and after ward, according to their accustomed violence and tyrannie, haue vertured and braued vnto them selues.

Therefore, the whole roate of this counterfait Priestelike is in deede nothing els, then as it were a sorte of Mooles and light persones: euen such Prielates and Bishoppes as children make among them selues at sainte Nicolas tyme. And as is their Priesthood, so also are their Liues, their Sacrifices, and all their workes, directed to mere superstitious and for the belly.

Thei therefore onely are an holle and spiritual Priesthood, whiche are the true Christians and are built vpon this corner Stone. For such that Christ is the Bridegroom, we are his Spouse: and the Spouse by wife hath all thinges that bee bet husbandes, & receiue his owne bodie. For when hee giueth himselfe to his Spouse by wife, he can not but with all alio giue himselfe wholy vnto her, and al that he hath whatsoeuer. Like wise the wife doth giue, and becometh herselfe wholy vnto him. Now, is Christ an high Priest, and chief of all Priestes, as appointed by God himselfe, who so be hath offered by his owne bodie, which is the true and perfect sacrifice of a priest. Seruile,

lie, he paid for vs upon the Crosse, whiche is an other office that appertaineth to a Priest. And lastly, he preached also the Gospell, and taught men bothe how to knowe God and themselves. These thre offices therefore, he bestowed and bequeathed vnto vs. And such y he himself is thus a Priest, and we his Brethren, all wee that are Christians haue not onely power and authoritie, but also a commaundement and charge: yea it is our partes and duties, and necessarilie behooueth vs to see out and preache the glorie of God, to maie and make intercession one of vs for an other vnto GOD, and finallye to offer vp our selues vnto God. All these considered, let hym come forth that dare not cā presume truely to preach or declare the Word of God, vntlesse he bee a Priest after this manner and fashion.

To offer vp spirituall Sacrifices acceptable to God, by Iesus Christ.

Spirituall Sacrifices are not the money that men are enforced and must paye to the Pope, neither the Sacrifices that in the olde Testament were wont to bee offered, when they were commaunded of all thinges which they had and possessed, to offer vp the tenth. These and suche like outwarde actions both Sacrifices and riteshoodes are ceased, and are nowe netue and fustiuall. Christ is a Priest, and so also are all wee: and as he offered his bodye, so also ought wee to offer vp ours. They are al those thinges performed and fulfilled, whiche by the Sacrifices of the olde Testament were prefigured and signified, after whatsoever manners they were doen. And to knit vp all in a threde, all these thinges are nothing els, but to preache and embrace the Gospell.

Hee that preache this, and in his harte embrace the same, he it is that doeth and perfecteth all these thinges: killeth the Calse, to wit, the motions and concupiscences of the flesh, and crucifieth the olde Adā. For that same brute Beast that is in our flesh and blood, must by the Gospell bee slaine: whiche is as muche to saie, as that wee must bee offered and killed as

Vpon the first Epistle

a Sacrificed sacrifice. Then (I say) is the office of a Priest by vs
duely and rightly executed, when we sacrifice vnto God, this
sinne pernicious, naughty, sloughfull and idle. All of our
sins. If the world doe it not, we our selues must needs doe it.
For abolished and killed must al that be, whatsoeuer it is that
we haue of the olde Adam, as afore said of the first Chapter we
heard more at large. And this is that onely sacrifice, whiche is
pleasing and acceptable vnto GOD. Whereby now, maie wee
clerely see, how farre we are from truth, those dolthe and blind
guides of the blinde haue drawen vs, and how shamefullie they
haue hitherto mistaken this place.

But here now, maie a question arise: If the case so stande,
that we bee all of vs Priests, and that all haue power and au-
thoritie to preache, what shall wee then saie? Shall there bee
no difference among men? Must women also execute the par-
tes of Priests? I aunswere, that in the newe Testament it
was utterly vnnieete that any Priest should haue a haue
Croune, not for that the thing of it self is euill, (like a man
maie if he will haue at his bodie haue) but for that, there should
bee any difference at all betwene them and any other of the
common sort of the Christians, whiche thing wth deede our
faith can not suffer: so that those which be now called Priests,
are no otherwile in that respect, then others of the people who
they at the last. Onely this they vnder to appointe some, vnto
whom being elected and chosen by the Church or Congrega-
tion, the office and charge of preaching was committed. And
therefore, there is name other difference among Christians,
but onely in respect of Office, vnto whiche a man is by the
Church lawfully to be called. Before God there is no diffe-
rence at all. For therefore are some chosen and selected out of the
Church, to the intent that in the name and behalf of the whole
Congregation, they maie beare and execute that office and
function: which office neuertheless all haue: and not, that one
should haue more power (absolutely) then the rest. Therefore
ought no man to intrude himselfe vpon him to preache to
the Congregation, till it be lawfully, that he be chosen by the
Church,

Church; and therefore to appointe and constitute without againe, upon just occasion the same. For the rule of place, now, the Church beinge his Church and erected and builded amonge the people as a certaine proper state and constitution; as though they were so appointed and constituted by God by means whereof they haue gotten here such large privileges, that now aduaunces euen hindring vs our felicitie here in the good of Christendome, there is more difference and greater difference; then is betwene vs and the Duties. (When thou wilt consider and looke into the that be the duties of Christians, thou oughtest not to make of them any respect of difference; as that thou shouldest saie, this is a man and that is a woman; this is the maister and that is the seruant; this is a young man and that is an olde man; as that thou shouldest say to the Gala. Chap. iiij. For they are all one, and a spirituall people; and therefore they are all Priests together, and all brethren; and ought to serue for the Word of God. Saying that, in the Church, women ought not to speake, but to be silent that to men to teache and preache therein, be they of the continuall commandment of God; who hath commanded that women ought to be subject to their husbands; as Saterd. 2. and teacheth 1. Cor. xiiij. This ordet doeth God in beeing present and assisting of. But for this, he doeth not admit any difference of power. But in places where none are allowed to be but women; and no men, as in Nunneries, there might a woman well be appointed to preache to the rest.

Therefore this is the true Priesthood, which as we haue said) consisteth in these three pointes: namely, in spirituall oblation; in prayng for the Church or Congregation; and in teachyng and instructyng the same with the pure Word of God. He that can do this, is a Priest; and who soeuer is such, upon them also is set the charge to preache the Word; to pray for the Congregation; and to sacrifice themselves vnto God. For sake therefore and renounce the opinion of those Doltes, which call the common, rash sort of Clergie men, Clerges (as they call them) onely Priests; which kinde of persons

Vpon the first Epistle

son, you evidently see to exercise no other office, but to brynge out their lewdnesse with a shaven crowne, and greasse fingers. Whiche Chauncing and anoynting doo make Priests, then truely can I say well make an Aile to bee a Priest, by Chauncing and clipping off extreme of his haire, and by anoynting and besmeareing his thowdes.

Last of all, shewes Peter willerth vs to offer vp spirituall sacrifices acceptable vnto God by Iesus Christ. Now, if Christ bee that to yue some typon whom wee are buldoed, it must needs bee, that all our cogitations to Godward, ought to bee furthered, administred and doen by and throughe him alone, as hath afore been sufficiently declared. For God (although I should pine awhile and consume my self euen to death) would neuer a while regard or respect my death: but he respecteth and regardeth Christe, by whom it cometh to passe, that my workes are regarded and had in prync with God, which other wise, he would not accompte worth a rushe. Greate cause therfore there is why the Scripture teacheth Christe, a precious corner stone, saying that he communicateth and imparteth his vertue and power vnto all them that by faith are built vpon him: Therfore teacheth so Peter in this place, how Christe is that living stone, wherby plainly appereth, what also Christe is to vs. For it is a very apt similitude, whereby wee may easily vnderstande, how and in what sorte wee ought to beleeue in Christe.

Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Be-
lieue in holie, I put in Sion a chiefe corner stone, elect and
precious: and hee that beleeueth therein, shall not
be ashamed.
Vnto you therefore whiche beleeue, it is precious:
but vnto them whiche bee disobedient, the stone
whiche the builders sawered, the same is made
the head of the corner,
And a stone to stumble at, and a rocke of offence,
euen to them whiche stumble at the word beyng
disobedient,

disobedient vnto the which thing they were euen
ordained.

9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royall Priest-
hood, an holy nation, a people set at libertie, that
ye shoulde shewe forth the vertues of hym that
hath called you out of darkenes into his wonder-
full light.

10 Whiche in tyme past were not a people, yet are
now the people of God; whiche in tyme past were
not vnder mercie, but now haue obtained mercie.



Hath tolde you afore, how notably the Bishop
hath confirmed, and fortified this his Epistle
with Scriptures: at whiche marke, all pre-
achers generallie ought to aune and leuell to
wit, that thei sette and grounde all their pre-
ches vpon the Worde of God. So doeth he here in this place
inferred and bying together of true places of the Scripture toge-
ther. The first wherof, he hath taken worde for worde out of
the Prophete Isaiah to wit, that Christe is that precious fun-
damentall or Corner stone. Whiche place is the very same,
that wee euen last of all entreated of, and accompyng to our a-
bilitie expounded. The firste and chiefe place is, the Doctrine
of Faiche, whiche ought to bee first let downe as the Founda-
tion, if a man were to preache in any place where Christ afore-
tyme had not been preached. For here and hence must we take
our begynnynge, that Christe is that Stone, vpon whom Faiche
ought to be builded & to rest. That the Prophete speaketh not
of any corporall or materiall Stone, it is most plainely prouen
by that which next followeth: Ie that he beleue in him, shall
not bee ashamed. If I sought to beleue in him, theche follo-
weth, that he must needes bee a Spirituall Stone. For how
or why shoulde I beleue in Stones or Woods: I haue
must needes bee the true God, for because in the firste Com-
mancement of the first Table, wee are expressely forbidden
to beleue in any other thing, sayng in hym. Seung therefore
that

4 Vpon the first Epistle

that such a Stone is couched and laid in the foundation, vpon whom wee ought to beleue, it consequente followeth, that he the same is God. Again, he can not onely be God, but he must also be Man withall: because he is to bee partaker of the building, and not onely partaker, but also the head thereof. Now, where any house or building is set vp or reared, there it behooueth that one Stone bee agreeable to another, that eche one make frame and bee couched and squared in the same condition, nature and forme that the other stones are. Therefore, seeing that wee ought to bee builded vpon Christ, it must needs bee that he bee like vnto vs, and altogether of the same nature with other stones are of, whiche are builded and laid vpon him, that is to say, very perfect, and true Man as we are.

After this sorte, in plaine and common wordes the Scripture expresseth such high Mysteries and weightie matters to wit, the Summe of our Faith: and in such short and brief sentences to comprehend more then by any mortall man can possiblie be uttered.

Right Building or construction is, wee haue also declared, to witte, It is that Faith, by whiche we are staid and builded vpon Christ, reposing our whole trust and confidence in him, by whiche meanes wee become like vnto him: and this must therefore so be, that the whole building make consist of all his partes apiece agreeing together, and mutually joined & framed one into another. For it is of necessitie, that all the other Stones must be placed and couched properly, according to this first fundamental Stone. And this is Christ, the true of False.

But why doeth the Prophet call him, a Fundamentall Stone? Chiefly for none other cause, but that, as nothing can be builded, vntill the foundation Stone bee first laid (for eche of the other Stones rest and stae vpon that Stone, they can not stand) so must we leane and stae vpon Christ, and acknowledge him as our foundation, from whom springing our life and successe, we receiue all benefites. For wee doe not suppose and beare him, but he vs, and vpon him, like Sinne, Death, Hell, and all that we haue as yet, being thus suppo-

ed by hym, nothyng is able any whyle to hurte vs. For so long as we rest and stae hypon hym, as naturall stones doe hypon their foundation, and put our trust in hym, we must needs be where he is.

Furthermore, the Prophete also calleth hym, a Corner Stone. The maner of the holte Ghost, is to edefie and speake muche in fewe wordes. Now, Christ is the Corner Stone, for that, he conuyned bothe Gentiles and Jewes, who afore were at mayntail enmitie, and of theiur gathered together one Church: of whiche matter and argument Sainct Paule writeth at large. The Jewes gloried muche, that thei had the law of God, daunting them selues to bee the people of God, in respect whereof thei contemned the Gentiles. But when Christ came, he tooke awaie these glorious boastes of the Jewes, by calling the Gentiles also unto God. Therefore of bothe of vs, the Jewes (I meane) and the Gentiles he hath made one people, by Faith: and hath so bountifullly dealt with vs, that bothe of vs can not but needes confesse, that of our selues wee haue no goodnesse at all, but that we be all Synners, and that bothe of vs ioynly together, ought to looke for our righteousnesse and for heauen, not elswhe, but from hym alone: and that we beyng the Gentiles, haue our assurance of Faith, that Christ is come for our auail, helpe, relief, and succour, as well as for the Jewes. And therefore is he the Corner Stone, for that he hath ioyned together these twoo walles, knittynge thein faste one to an other, to witte, the Jewes and the Gentiles, that thereby we might be made one building and one house.

Laste of all the Prophete thus concludeth, He that beleueth in hym, shall neuer bee ashamed. In that, the Prophete saith, that thei shall not be ashamed, whiche beleue in Christ, he plaunp thei with vnto vs, what God hath in his alone counsell decreed, namely, that the whole worlde, shall one daie bee confounded and ashamed: But yet that he will deliuer some out of that companie and number, so that none shall be able to adoeve and escape that confusion, sauyng onely suche as shall truly beleue in Christ. In this sort weeth Christ also hym

Vpon the first Epistle

lett, expounde and interpyete these thynges in the laste Chapter of Marke, where he saith thus, He that shall beleue and is Baptized, shall be saued, but he that will not beleue, shall bee damned. In whiche woordes soothly he alluded vnto this prophete. And therefore verie well to this purpose spake S. Peter alsoe in his first Chapter, where he saied, That the Prophetes haue enquired of the tyme and searched of the saluation, and Prophecied of the grace that should come vnto vs. And after this maner now ought Christ to bee preached, that it is he whiche hath riode and deliuered vs from this confusion and shame, whereunto we did all lye open & were endangered.

Let these stout Champions, and braggng maineiners of Freewill, and of any ablenesse and power in man, come forth and answer this place if they can. When soeuer thou art minded at once and with one reason, vterly to ouerthrowe all humane woordes, all humane doctrines, and all whatsoeuer else can, or maie procede from man, this one place shall abundantly furnishe thee with sufficient matter to confute the same, that they shall not bee able to stande, but to fall downe euen like oyle leaues from a Tree.

We conclude therefore, that whatsoeuer dooeth not stae and leane vpon this Stone, the same to bee in a desperat and forlozne case. This quite debarreth thee from attributing any thyng at all, vnto thine owne woordes. The holie Ghoste and Diuine Waiesie speaketh in suche familiar phasies, that any man male perceiue the same: and againe, vtereth all so mightily, that nothing is able to stande againste it. Who therfore dare oppose hym self, or againsaie this? Naie, who is he that will not therewith be daunted and terrified? God therefore requirerh at our handes, that we should vterly distrust our owne felues, and relye onely and wholly vpon his goodnesse, being builded vpon that foundation, which no creature can be able to ouerthrowe, or cast downe: whiche is as muche to saie, as that no manne should trust to his owne righteousnesse, but depende and stae vpon the righteousness of Christe, and the benifites that he hath purchased for hym. But what is it, to stae, de-
pende,

pence, and relye vpon his righteousnesse: It is nothing els, but that I should altogether despair of all help in my self, and enter into this cogitation: all righteousnesse, all truthe, and all whatsoeuer is myne, must needs quail, and bee renouered: And I am vholly to put my trust in this, that the Righteousnesse, Truthe, and Life of Christe, and all his goodnesse and benefites, whiche I doubt not but are frankly, and freely giue vnto me, shall continue for euer. The foundation is already laied, wherein I firmly stande: And sure I am that whatsoeuer is not staid on it, can not but altogether fall doune. But he that leaneth vpon this foundation, shall not onely not be confounded and ashamed, but shall for euer stande so faste, that no power shall be able ever to hurt him. Therefore must Christ not onely be a Stone, but a Stone of foundation: whiche thing ought to make vs chearfull and bold. For it is God that hath spoken it, who can not lye.

Finally this Stone serueth not for it self, but suffereth it self to bee troden doune, and digged so deepe into the ground, that it can not be seen: but the Stones whiche be toucht and laied vpon it, are seene. For therefore was he giuen vnto vs, that we should receiue giftes of hym, that we should rest our selues vpon hym, staid on hym, and steadfastly beleue that whatsoeuer he is, the same to be whole ours: And whatsoeuer he can doe, the same maketh to our saluation, in so muche that I dare boldly saie, That are myne owne proper Goodes, and my Treasure, wherevpon my Conscience is firmly staid, and whereto I steadfastly trust.

7 Vnto you therefore whiche beleue, it is precious: but vnto them whiche bee disobedient, the Stone whiche the builders disallowe, the same is made the heade of the Corner.

8 And a Stone to stumble at, and a Rocke of offence.

This

Vpon the first Epistle



His moste excellent and precious Stone, is
to some precious and moste highlie regarded:
Againe, vnto no fewe, it is not precious at all,
but rather a Stone of Offence, and a Stone
whereat many doe stumble. And how cometh
this geare to passe? Forsooth, the Scripture speaketh of the
same, in twpo sortes: namelie, there bee some that doe beleue
on hym: And againe, there bee many that doe not beleue on
hym. Now, vnto them that doe beleue on hym, he is precious:
and it can not be, but their hartes (hauyng still their hope, trust
and confidence in hym) muste needs bee exceedingly cheared,
and made ioyfull. And therefore it is, that he saierh: Vnto you
whiche beleue on hym, he is precious: that is to saie, he is of
you highlie esteemed. For, although he bee neuer so precious
and excellent of hymself and by himself, yet would that without
more nothing at all auaille vs: and therefore it behooueth that
he muste bee precious vnto vs: to the ende it maie enriche vs
with many singular good thynges: Like vnto some precious
Pearle or Gemme, whiche keepeth and retaineth not his ver-
tue to it self, but brekerh and sheweth it forth to others: and
so totallie manifesteth her his whole powers and vertue, that
we maie notv both enioie and possesse, whatsoever the same is.

But vnto them whiche beleue not, this Stone is nothing
precious, for thei disallowe and cast it auaie, and take offence
and stumble at it: wherby it falleth out, that thei repose no as-
surauice or trust in it, and so vnto them it turneth vnto a grea-
ter detriment, and maketh them worse: albeit the same of his
owne nature is wont rather to stirre by in men a more strong
hope and perfect trust. Thei that thus stumble, are not onely
suche as are charred and clogged in those gross and manifest
synnes: but suche hypocrites rather, whiche beare themselves
bold vpon their vizarded sanctimonie and fained holinesse, which
trust vnto their owne Freewill, to their owne Workes & their
owne Righteousnesse. These fellows can not chuse but stub-
ble and bee offended at this Stone. Here now speeth God defi-
nitely set it downe, that thei whiche come without workes,
must

must come by fauſe onely, for their righteousneſſe: and that
 they whiche come otherwiſe then by fauſe, ſhall neuer ſeepe
 of their purpoſe: becauſe they goe about (as ſaith ſaint Peter ſaith
 Rom. x.) To ſtabliſhe their ſaluation by their owne righte-
 ouſneſſe. And therefore ſaith ſaint Peter here, That he is
 made the Stone which the Builders diſallowed and reſuſed:
 and here he conferreth certaine places of the Scripture toge-
 ther, eſcſcouds citing that text out of the 118. Pſalme: where-
 vnto he afoze alluded: The Stone which the Builders reſuſed,
 is the head of the Corner. Who theſe builders bee, wee haue
 afoze ſufficiently declared: namely, they that teache and preach
 the Law, and go about to iuſtifie men by their Works. Theſe
 Juſtifiers agree aſwell with Chriſt, as Water with Oile,
 and therefore it muſt neceſſarily followe, that theſe Pe-
 ritomongers bee euen they, that reiect and reſuſe this Stone.

He further bringeth in an other place out of Eſay Chap. viij
 where in the Propheete ſojetelleth that the ſame thyng ſhould
 come to paſſe, whiche ſaint Peter here in this place telleth is
 come to paſſe already, and is daily doen and put in practice.
 His wordes are theſe: Sanctifie the Lorde of Hoſtes, and let
 hym bee your feare, and let hym be your dread, and he ſhall
 bee to you as a Sanctuarie: but a ſtumbling ſtone, and as a
 Rocke to fall vpon, to bothe the houſes of Iſraell. The mea-
 ning of the Propheete is as though he ſhould ſaie: The Lorde
 ſhall be vnto you a Sanctification, that is, he ought to be ſanc-
 tified in your heartes: other Sanctification you neede none,
 neither is there any other thyng required of you, but that you
 beleue in hym. To all others, he ſhall bee a Stone of offence
 and ſtumbling.

And what is the ſenſe and meaning of theſe wordes, Of-
 fence and Stumbling? Truly this: when Chriſt is preached,
 and that thou heareſt theſe wordes, Beholde, he is the Stone
 that is laied for a foundation: then art thou utterly to diſpaire,
 diſtruſt and renounce al helpe in thy ſelf, and to condemne and
 account as deteſtable, all thine owne workes and all thine
 owne Righteousneſſe: and onely to reſpoſe thy confidence vpon
 hym.

Vpon the first Epistle

hym, as melie beleuyng that Chyistes righteousnesse is thine: Ar cheit and suche like wordes these fellows stand agast, are offended, and becomie worse then afoze. What (saie thei) darrest thou auouche & saie that Virginitie, Single life, Passing and suche like, are nothyng worth: Thou speakest thus throughe the very instinct of the Deuill. For nothyng but mere good deedes are accepted before GOD. Yea thei are not (as they think) without some strong places of Scripture, for the maintenance of their assertion: haupng still in their mowthes, that God hath commaunded vs to doe good Woorkes. Therefore when wee reflect the same, straightwaies wee heare at their handes, Heretike, Heretike, to the Fier with him, to the Fier with him. And thus thei can not abide this Stone, thei violently rushe and push at it, and doe all thei can to yull it downe, and are therein themselves so crushed and brylled, that by the same very Stone thei are utterly dashed in peces. Euen as in the xxx. of Mathewes Gospell, Chyiste himself saith: Haue you not read in the Scriptures, The Stone whiche the Builders refused, the same is made the head of the Corner? And anone after it followeth: Whosoever shall fall on this Stone, he shall bee broken, but on whomsouer it shall fall, it will grinde hym to powder. Take heede therefore what ye doe, it is no game nor playng matter that is spokē concernyng this Stone. It is laied and shall for ever remaine in his place: hee that wil rushe and bruste himself vpon it, can not better escape but be dashed in peces and gronde into powder.

This is the stumblng and offence taking at this Stone, whereof the Scriptures speake muche. Therefore the Jewes euen to this daie doe stumble at this Stone, and still will continue till the ende of the world: for then shall this Stone fall vppon all Inbelies and faithlesse Discreautes, and grinde them utterly to powder. And thus it cometh to passe, that Chyiste (albeit hee be an elect and precious Stone) is called without any fault of his owne, a Stone of Offence and Stumblng. And as the Jewes do, so also doe wee and that continually. For as thei greatly boasted of the name of GOD, and

vaunted

haunted themselves to bee the peruller people of God: when sa-
fareth it now with vs: for vnder the pretext of Christe, and of
the Church of Christe, wee renounce and renege the name of
Christe, and flatly refuse this precious Stone. Wee come into
the worlde among them, to the intent thei should reiect and
renounce their owne workes: which thei not abiding, reiected
and refused hym.

- 8 Euen so them whiche stumble at the Woorde, be-
yng disobedient, vnto the whiche thyng thei were
euen ordeined.



When it is saied that these workes are not good,
nor any thyng accompted of with God, thei
neither can, neither will abide the hearing ther-
of. Now, God hath put Christ for a foundation,
vpon whom thei ought to bee laied and placed,
and by hym attaine al their Saluation. For to thende that thei
should bee founded and laied vpon hym, he hath caused hym by
preachyng of the Gospell to bee notified, and declared vnto the
whole Worlde. Hym will not thei receiue hit reiect, & so per-
siste in their owne fleshly sense and workes. For if thei could
abide themselves to be placed and couched vpon Christ, their
high pompe, dignitie, wealth and power would soone quail,
and be abated.

- 9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royall Priesthood
a holie Nation, a people set at libertie.

Here hath he dignified them that bee Christians, with
their true titles: and this place hath he take out of the
vi. of Deuter. Where it is thus saied to the Iewes:
Thou art an holie people vnto the Lorde thy God: the Lord
thy GOD hath chosen thee to bee a precious people vnto
hymself, aboue all people that are vpon the Earth. And in the
ix. of Exod. he saith, Ye shal bee my cheef treasure aboue all
people.

people: yet shall bee vnto me also a kyngdome of Priestes and an holie Nation. Here thou seest of whom Peter speaketh. As I said afore, so saie I still, that wee must acquaint our selues so to speake of Priestes, as the Scripture speaketh of theim. Let it not trouble thee, who thei bee that the vulgar and common so to teamech Priestes. Let euery man in Gods name, tearme them as he liste, but cleane thou faste vnto the woorde of God, and whomsoever thou seest by hym to be tearmed and called Priest, lette the same also bee like wise tearmed and called by thet. We giue good leaue to the greasie Rable of those (whom the Bishoppes and Pope do consecrate and anoint) to tearme theim selues Priestes, or by what other name thei will, so that thei call not theimselues the Priestes of God. For thei are not able by one woorde out of the Scriptures to appoyne theim selues so. But when thei will stiffely mainteine, that this place also is to be vnderstoode, as spoken of them: and sterte thou vnto theim, as afore I haue taught thee, and as he torme, to whom Sauntre Peter here speaketh; and thou shalt quickly see theim saye theim selues open vnto shame and impudencie. For it is moste manifest and plaine; that he speaketh to all the people of Churche, and the whole Congregation of Christians, when as he saith, You are a chosen generation, and an holie people. Againe, hitherto he hath spoken of none other persones, then of them that are vnto the Corner Stone, and doe beleue. And therefore it euidently and certainly followeth, that he whiche doeth beleue, is no Priest. Againe, when as thei shall saye, that these wordes are so to be taken, as the auncient Fathers haue interpreted and expounded the. Therunto make thou this aunswere: Lette the fathers or any other whatsoever, interpret what thei will: but sauntre Peter dooth thus speake vnto me, who hath a farre better testimony and warrant from God, then thei haue: and also is elder then thei, and therefore I will subscribe my selfe vnto hym. Finally, this place needeth no interpretation at all, like it is furthe plaine tearmes and wordes, speaketh of them that beleue. Now, who is he that lettynge, how monstrously the

Polle Hoyn

Pollethorne greasse Popelnynges erre, and falle in the Article of faith. And therefore wee enuie not the name that they call themselves by, whether it be Priestles or otherwise. For wee make not any care, what, and how they call them selves, but herein standeth the question, whether in the Scriptures they be called Priestles, and whether God doe so name and call the. There maie some bee chosen and appointed by the Church, to execute the charge and office of Ministers of the Word: to feede the Congregation by preaching, and to administred the Sacramentes: and yet neuerthelesse wee are all Priestles, as many of vs as are Christians. For seeing that wee be founded and couched vpon that Stone, whiche is the highest Priestle before GOD: wee also must needs be Priestles also, for that whatsoeuer he hath, we haue, and the same is ours.

Wherefore I would wishe that this worde Priest: as well as this name Christian, should bee common to all. For these names, Priestle, Christian, and Baptized are all one. Now, as I can not abide, that these Popishe Shatterpynge should thus presume and take vpon them, onely to be good Christians, or onely Baptized: So neither ought I to suffer this, that they would onely haue them selves to bee Priestles. Although notwithstanding, they haue violently haled and pulled this worde, as pertinently and properly spoken vnto them, even with the like presumption and blamelesse boldnesse, as they haue called that onely the Church, whiche the Pope with his Buttes Crewe hath hitherto concluded and decreed. But the Scripture teacheth vs an other manner of lesson. And therefore diligently note and marke these thynges, to the ende thou maiest thoughtfully discerne betwene them wherin God calleth Priestles, and them that so call them selves. For by this meanes, (after a long mistaking of it) wee must so long tarrye and tarrye this worde Priestle, to his right sense and proper meaning, that it maie bee as common a name; as the name of Christian. For to bee a Priest, is not the name of any outward, or externall office, but it is such as is exercised onely towards God, and that in Spirit.

John 14. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18.

P. lii.

And

Vpon the first Epistle

31 And euen after the self same maner it is, that wee are all indifferently called Kinges. For euen as Priests, so also Kinges are in this place, Spirituall wordes of woordes, like as also these names are, Christian, Holie, and Church. And euen as thou doest not call any man a Christian, because he hath much money and wealthe, but because, he beeyng builde vpon the aforesaid Stone, beleueth in Christe: So like wise art thou not therfore called Priest, because thou hast a shauen Crowne, and settest the fireates in a long Soune, but because thou darrest appeare and shewe thy self in the sight of God, offering vnto hym: and praiyng for the whole Church: vnto whom thou both canst and wilt to preache Christe. And after the verie same maner altogether, thou arte not therfore a Kyng, because thou wearest a Crowne of golde, and hast large Dominions, and many people vnder thee in subiection, but because thou art Loyde of all thynges, yea, ouer Death, Sinne, and Hell. For thou art aswell a Kyng, as Christ hymself is a Kyng, if so bee that thou beleue on hym. Now, he is not a Kyng in suche sort, as the Kinges of the worlde are: For he neither weareth any Crowne of golde, neither rideth he pompously abroade with any glitteryng traine, and gallant hoxles. But yet neuerthelesse, he is the Kyng of all Kinges, and hath all Kinges vnder his power and iurisdiction: and to speake all at once, all thynges must be subiect vnder his feete. Behold, euen so greate and suche a Loyde art thou, if thou beleue on hym: for what soeuer he hath, the same is also thine.

Here might some peradventure obiecte thus vnto me and saie: Saunte Peter by this thy assertion called Christians, Kinges: and yet all the worlde well knoweth, that we are not all Kinges: and therfore (saie they) this place is not to bee vnderstoode, as spoken of all sortes of Christians. For he that is a Christian, is not therevpon straightwaies the Kyng of Fraunce, or that Priest of Rome. But here now will I demaunde this question of theim: whether the Kyng of Fraunce be a Kyng in the sight of God or no: Whiche thyng no man dare vpon warrant affirme.

For GOD will not Iudge according to the dignitie of a Crowne. In Earth (in deede) and before the worlde he is a King: but when Death hath once seized upon hym, then shall his Kingdome cease and haue an ende; and then shall he (whelesse he beleue aright) be subiecte vnder the seate of them that truly beleue. Alse in this place speake of an eternall Kingdome and Priesthoode: of the whiche soyte is euery one before God, whiche beleueth: and is both a true Priest, and a true King. Now, who is so ignorant that knoweth not, that all the rable of the greasie Schauelnges, bee nothing lesse then Priests? And as these aforesaid pollethorne Schauelnges, are not therefore to be reputed Priests afoze GOD, because of their crownes, so neither before God are Kynges accounted as Kynges, because they weare Crownes. Crowned Kynges and anointed Priests are of this worlde, and are established and constituted by Men. The Pope may at his holie pleasure, make as many suche pollyng Priests as hym liketh, to serue his turne, but let him not presume to constitute and make a Priest, that boldlie maie bee accounted for a Priest before God: for, suche doeth God himself make and appoint. Therefore, in that, Saint Peter here in this place saith: You bee a royall Priesthood, it is as muche as if he should saie, You are Christians. If thou wouldest knowe, what title, what power, prerogative and glorie, true Christians haue, thou seest that they bee, Kynges, Priests, and a chosen people. Now, what this Priesthood is, doeth here straightwaies ensue.

9 That you should shewe forth the vertues of hym that hath called you out of darknesse into his marvelous light.



His office especially appertaineth unto the Priest, that hee should bee the Ambassadour or messenger of God, and according to that Commission which he hath from God, sincerely preach and declare his Word. The vertues (saith Saint Peter) that is to wit, those

wonders

Wonders to hithe God hath doen for you, in bringing you out of darkenesse into light, your portes and office is, to preach and tel forth: for therein chiefly consisteth the office of a pastor. Thus therefore and to this ende ought your preaching to tend, that one Brother should declare and shewe forth unto an other, that greates and wonderfull worke of Gods admirable vertue: how Christ hath deliuered vs from Sinne, Death and Hell, and all other miseries, and hath called vs into eternall life.

Whereof you ought to admonishe others also, that thei in like sort may attaine and come into this Light. For unto this ende ought all your duties to be directed: first to acknowledge and knowe what God hath doen for you: and next, with all diligent care and studie, to notifie, preach and openly make knowne this benefite of God towards you, and this wonderfull worke of his in you: and also to drawe and call all men indifferentlie into this Light. Where you see any men that are as yet ignorant hereof, those ought you to instruct, and to teache these thinges, in whiche you your selues haue been instructed and taught: to wit, that by the vertue and power of God, thei must obtaine saluation, and attaine this merueilous Light.

Here thou seest how saint Peter plainly saith, that there is but one onely Light: wherein he maketh it most apparant, that all our Reason (seeing it neuer so sharpe to vnderstande and perceiue) is nothing els then mere darkenesse. For albe it, that Reason be able and hath the skill to coump, one, two, three &c. and likewise to see, differoe and knowe, blake from white, and greates from small, and so of other externall and outward thinges, yet is it not able to see what Faith is. Here is it altogether blinde, insomuche that if all the wisdom of all men in the worlde were gathered and incorporated into one, yet were it not able to comprehend or reach so much as vnto one letter of the wisdom of God. Therefore, S. Peter here speaketh of another Light, and that a merueilous Light, and that the alfo collecteth enegame of vs, that we growe in darknesse

nesse and better blindnesse, if God dooe not call vs into his true Light.

Experience also teacheth vs the same thing. For when we heare it preached, that by our workes we can not obtaine any thng at Gods handes, and therefore that wee haue neede of a Mediator, to make intercession vnto God for vs, and to reconcile vs vnto hym: heere (doublesse) must reason needes confesse, that of it self it was neuer able to vnderstande and knowe these thinges, and therefore had neede of another Light and another knowledge, to teache it to vnderstande the same. Therefore whatsoeuer is not the Woyle of God and Faith, the same is nothyng els then blinde darkenesse. For without these two (the Woyle of God (I meane) and Faith) Reason tumblerh at randon, and graapeth after his waie like a blinde man in the darke, catchyng holde first of one thng and then of another, and neuer knoweth what it should dooe. But when these thinges are tolde to the greates learned and wise men of this woyle, thei can not abide to heare it, thei stamp and stare, thei fret, fume and mercuriously rage at it. And therefore, S. Peter sheweth himself here, an Apostle of a singular vndaunted boldnesse, in that, he dares to call that Darknesse, whiche the whole woyle in a maner doeth euen generallie almoste, adoe and reuerence as Light.

Now, therefore wee see that the chiefeest and especiallest office of all others, appertainyng vnto vs Christians, is, that wee should shewe forth and declare the vertues and wonderfull workes of our God. These Vertues and notable workes, by God for vs doen, are those which somewhat afoye we haue spoken of inamely, how that Christ by the vertue of God hath swallowed vp Death, deuoured Hell, consumed Sinne, and placed vs into an eternal life. These Vertues are so great and wonderfull, that no man is able to comprehend the same, muche lesse to persourne them. And therefore it is to little purpose, that some in this poynt object and preach to vs Christians, the doctrines of men: they ought rather to preach vnto vs this Vertue, whiche ouercometh both Deuill, Sinne and

12. J.

Death,

Vpon the first Epistle

Death. And here againe, alludeth saier Peter to sundrie places of the sacred Scripture, as in all the rest of his Epistle almost, he still contyneth and knitteth one place of Scripture to confirme and proue an other. For of this, doe all the Prophetes foretell and prophesie, that it should come to passe, that all men euery where should worship & preache forth the name and glorie of God, and the power of his mightie arme: and that he should worke suche a worke, whereof the whole world should both speake and make repoyte. Of this, the Prophetes are euerywhere very plentifull: and to these places doeth S. Peter here allude. Thei haue also spoken muche of Light and of Darkenesse, and that it is necessarie for vs to bee illumined with the Light of God: wherby (vndoubtedly) thei shewed and signified, that all humane Reason is nothing els then very Darkenesse it self.

IO Whiche in tyme past were not a people, yet are now the people of God: whiche in tyme past were not vnder mercie, but now haue obtained mercie.



His place worde for word is taken out of the Prophet Osee in his ij. Chap. and is cited also by saint Paule in the ix. to the Romanes, I will call them my people whiche were not my people. Al which sayings belong to this place. God peculiarly choole the people of Israel, and bestowed on them gre ate honour: he gaue vnto them many Prophetes, and did for theim many merueilous things: because he had decreed, that out of this people the man Christ should be borne.

For this Children sake, were all these things done for the, and for this cause, are thei in the Scripture called the people of God. Whiche the Prophetes more at large expounded, and foretolde, that this promise of Christ should stretch further and reache also vnto the Gentiles. There fore saier S. Peter in this place, You are now the people of God, which in time past

past were not a people. And by this it euidentlie appeareth, that he wrote this Epistle vnto the Gentiles, and not vnto the Jewes. And hereby his meaning is to proue and shewe, that the saying of the Prophete is now fulfilled, sith thei whiche once were Idolatrous Nations and blasphemous Gentiles, and thereby no People, are now made and become an holie nation, a peculier people, a royall Priesthood and a Kyngdome: and haue all thynges that Christ hath: so that in the meane tyme thei haue onely a steadfast belefe,

I I Dearly beloued, I beseeche you, as strangers and pilgrimes, abstaine from fleshly lustes, which fight against the soule.

I 2 And haue your conuersation honest among the Gentiles, that they whiche speake euill of you as of euill doers, maie by your good woorkes which thei shall see, glorifie God in the day of visitation.



Saint Peter here useth a style somewhat differing from the phrase of Saint Paule. For Saint Paules methode is not after this sorte, as anone wee shall heare: but every man hath a seuerall and peculier kinde of speaking: as also in the Prophetes wee maie easily perceiue and see. Whitherto hath hee very aptlie and orderlie planted the foundation of the Christian Faith, whiche is his chiefeest drift: Now proceedeth he to teache vs, how we ought to demean and behaue our selues generallie towards all Men. And this is truely the verie right course and order of true preaching. Namely, first to set out the dignitie, excellencie and effect of Faith: how it is to be knowne, how and what it worketh, what vertue, strength, efficacy, and nature it hath, how it feedeth and bringeth vnto vs all thynges euen aboundantlie, whiche are appertinent and needful to Godlinesse or Saluation: how that no good Work can bee doen by any man, but onely by Faith, and finally how that by this faith, all that whiche God hath, is made ours. If

Vpon the first Epistle

God now haue thus dealt with vs, and hath giuen and bestowed all his riche giftes vpon vs, it followeth, that he himself also is ours: in so much that by Faith, we are possessed of all his goodnesse, whereby wee can lacke nothing. What a greates charge therefore lyeth there now vpon vs, to doe in lieu of this so surpassyng bountie: Shall wee giue our selues to idlenesse? God forbid. It were best (in deede) geuen straight waies to dye, that we might presently haue the fruition and possession of all these his gracious goodnesse. But so long as wee liue here, it is our partes and dueties, so to deale and so to shew our selues in every respect towards our neighbours, as God hath dealt and shewed himself towards vs. Therefore it is Faith onely that saueth vs: & Loue requireth of vs, that we should serue our neighbours and bee carefull ouer them. For that whiche Faith receiueth from God, Loue bestoweth vpon our neighbour. That which was spoken in one word, maie now largely be expounded and declared in many, as S. Peter doeth in this place. The meanyng therefore of the Apostle where he saith, Dearely beloued, I beseeche you as Straungers and Pilgrims, is this: You that are now one with Christ, are growen (as it were) into one masse or lump with him, in so much that his goodnesse is yours, and your hurt is his hurt: who as he is carefull bothe for you and for all suche thinges as maie happen vnto you, so also ought you to imitate here in this your sojourning a Souldour, and so to frame and direct your liues, that you maie seeme nothing lesse then to bee Citizens of this World, sith you bee adopted and enfranchised Citizens in heauen, where al good thinges are laied by for you. That if you should once loose all these transitorie and momentarie goodes of the world: yet hauing still Christ, who is infinitely more worth then all these brittle and temporall trash, you shall receiue and sustaine no damage, no losse, no hinderance at all.

The Deuill is Prince of this World, and gouerneth the same: and his Citizens are the men of the World: Therefore seying that you are not of this World, so vse and behaue your selues, as Straungers and Passengers doo in their time: who

who hauing not there their full wealth and Subſtance, make liſte to buye for their money onely ſuche thinges as be needefull and neceſſarie, and ſtraightwaies addeſſe themſelues forward to the diſpatch of their iourney. So alſo we, vnto whom this life is nothynge then a certaine paſſage to an other place, (for here wee haue no abiding place, but muſte paſſe to an other) ought not to take vnto our ſelues, nor vſurpe moze of theſe worldlyſſe peſſe and gooddes, then maie competently ſupplie our wantes for meate, drinke and raimente. All other thynges muſte bee ſo reked and accounted of, as that they maie not bee any hindrance or impechement, vnto that ſpedie iourney whiche wee make into an other Countrey. In Heauen wee are Citizens, on Earth wee are but Pilgrimes and ſtraungers.

II Abſteine from fleſhly luſtes, whiche fight againſte the Soule.



Will not here define, whether in this place S. Peter ſpeake of an outwarde Incontinencie or no: or whether he doe (as S. Paule order is) call all thoſe thynges Fleſhly, whiche a man yet liuyng in this bodie and carnall life, committeth and doeth without Faith. But I am of opinion that S. Peter in this place, ſeteth an other maner of reaſon. Neither doe I thinke that he taketh this word Soule, in ſuche a ſenſe, as S. Paule doeth, who taketh it for Spirit: But that he ſomewhat moze deeply (as I ſuppoſe) conſidered the propriety of the Greeke. Howbeit, it is not greatly materiall, whether a man vnderſtande this place, as meant of all carnall affections, or els onely of an externall and outwarde intemperance.

This profitable leſſon (notwithſtanding) is hereby taught vs, that no man in this life can be perfectly holie, and thoroughly pure from finnes. This place the Schoolemen haue groſſely miſtaken, rouyng farre wide from the true meaning thereof. For they thinke it to bee onely ſpoken and meant of them

R. 15,

that

Vpon the first Epistle

that bee Sinners: As though the holie ones were cleare without all euill lustes, and carnall affections.

But he that will profitablie searche and read the Scriptures, must with iudgement and discretion waigh and thoroughly sifter, the nature, sense, and signification of euery woorde: for the Prophetes vse sometymes so to speake of them that be holie, as that thei seme to pronounce theim pure, and altogether cleare from all maner of Sinnes: Againe, sometymes thei so speake of theim, as that thei confesse theim yet to haue euill affections, corrupt motions, and to fight against Synne.

This diuersitie and varietie, that in apparaunce seemeth to bee in theim, maruelouslie grauellet and offendeth the greate Rabbines, and wonderfullie blindeth their Senses from rightlie vnderstandyng the true meanyng of the Scriptures. Thus therefore slape thou thy self, and for thy sure conreiuynge of this and suche like places, bee at this resolution. Thou oughtest to consider Christians, after twoo sortes, namely, accordyng to their inwarde and hidden life, (to witte, Faith): and also accordyng to their outwarde and open life, that is to saie, the Flesh. Now, if thou consider and respecte a Christian, accordyng to Faith, he is all pure, and without all filthe and uncleannes: but after the flesh, he is not so.

For the woorde of GOD, can abide no vncleane thyng, to rest in that harte where it is thoughtlie and faithfullie receiued: so that the harte whiche faste cleaueth vnto the Woorde, can not but thereby bee thoughtlie purged, and entirely cleansed. Therefore in faith all thynges are perfecte, accordyng to that sayng afoze, wherein wee are sayed to bee Kynge, Priestes, and the peculier People of GOD. But for so muche as wee haue Faith, are as yet cladded in this flesh, and dwell on this Earth, it can not bee but that now and then wee feele within our selues, sundrie corrupt and Earthly affections, as Impatience, feare of Deathe, &c. And these bee the diseases remainyng yet of the old Sinne: For Faith hath not yet here taught to his perfection, nor gotten a full power ouer the flesh.

This

This maifest thou plainly and euidentlie vnderstande by the Parable, Luke. ix. of a certaine man, Who goyng doune from Hierusalem to Hiericho, fell among Thieues, who robbed hym of his raimente, and wounded hym verie sore and departyng lefte hym halfe dead: on whom in the ende a certaine Samaritane tooke compassion, boūd vp his woundes, powred in Oile and Wine, sett hym on his owne beast, and brought hym to an Inne, and made prouision for hym. Here thou seest, that this man was cared for, & his cure prouided for, anone after he was wounded: and now beeyng out of daunger of Death, was lefte sicke in deepe, but not vnto Death, howbeit he was not as yet fullie healed and cured. His life is preserued, and he left alīue, but yet is he not come to his perfecte healthe, he is lefte in the charge of the Phisitions to bee cured and dyessed after ward. Euen so wee that beleue, haue Christ all and entire, and are assured of eternall life: but our perfecte and consummate healthe wee haue not yet obtained: for some reliques of the old Adam remaineth yet still within vs.

To the same purpose, serueth that other Parable, mentoned by Christe Matth. xij. The Kyngdome of heauen is like vnto Leauen, whiche a woman taketh and hideth in three Peckes of Meale, till all bee leauened. For when the Meale is begonne to bee kneaded, the Leauen is all there, but it hath not yet sownd and pearced the whole lumpe of Dowe, the mixture is not yet fullie perfected: & yet the Meale is therein still, till it bee fullie Leauened, and moze Leauen maie not bee put vnto it. So also, whatsoeuer thou oughtest to haue, thou hast it already by Faith, whereby thou hast taken holde of the Crope and embraced it: but it hath not yet thoughtlie soaked and pearced into thee, and therefore it needes must bee so long in woorkyng, vntill thou be whollie renewed. And in this soze, oughtest thou to discern and interpret the Scripture: And not so to Jumble and mangle the textes thereof, as dooe the Papistes. Therefore when in the Scriptures thou readest of holie menne, that are saied to bee perfecte: thou must thus vnderstande it, that accordyng to Faith they were altogether pure

Vpon the first Epistle

pure and without synne: But all the reste was fleſhe, and therefore could not bee entirely cleane. Wherevpon, Chriſtians in their prayers, deſire to bee diſſolued, and ridde of this bodie of fleſhe, that thei maie whollie attaine to an entire puritie. Thei that other wiſe teache, neither haue any feeling, nor yet any ſounde taſte of the ſame. And therevpon it cometh to paſſe, that thei ſpeake euen as thei thinke within themſelues, and as thei can comprehend by their owne reaſon, and therefore thei can not chooſe but bee deceiued. This hath been a ſtumbling blocke to many, yea, of them that haue been accompred wor-
thie and famous for their holinneſſe and ſanctimonie, and who haue taught and witten verie muche. Origene ſpeaketh not one worde hereof in his Bookes. Hierome neuer vnderſtoode the. Auguſtine alſo would haue had ſmall knowledge thereof, if he had not ſo much buckled with the Pelagians. Some, whē thei ſpeake of holie men, thei ſo muche extol and dignifie them, as though either thei had been of ſome higher degree and excellencie then other Chriſtians: or els as though thei had had no feeling of this Fleſh: or as though thei had not complained thereof, as wel and as muche as wee. Therefore ſaith Saint Peter: You are all cleane, and haue your full righteouſneſſe, there now remaineth nothynge for you, but y^e ſtoutly fight againſt theſe wicked and naughtie affections. And ſo alſo ſpeaketh Chriſt, Iohn xiiij. He that is waſhed, needeth not, ſauyng onely to waſhe his feete. For it is not enough, that the heade and handes bee cleane: and therefore albert be ſaie, that thei are all cleane, yet neuertheleſſe he requirerh them to waſhe their feete.

But what meanyng hath Saincte Peter, in ſaiyng Abſtaine ye from fleſhlie luſtes, whiche fight againſt the Soule? Forſoother, euen this. Thinke not that your life is a game or a ſportyng paſſyme, or that you maie lulle your ſelues in eaſe, without takyng any further care. Your ſynne is (in deede) taken a waie by Faith: But yet neuertheleſſe ye carie fleſhe ſtill about with you: whiche fleſhe is giuen to many outragious luſtes and diſordered affections: and therefore ye muſt enuiey
and

and applie your selues to suppress, subdue and keete the mal-
lice ouer it. Here haue you neede of a greates strength, that ye
may be able to vanquish and extinguish your concupiscences
for the stronger and greater that our faith is, the fiercer and
sharper shall your assaults and temptations bee. It becometh
you therfore, to stand stoutlie on your garde, and to bee well
furnished and armed; and to acquaint your selues to fight still
without intermissions. For, your assaults, will bee greuous
and terrible, and will rush vpon you by lumpes and heapes,
and nothing will be left vntempted, to carie you awaie cap-
tue.

¶ Hereupon also it is, that Saint Paul Roma. vii. saith. I
delight in the Lawe of God, conceyning the inner Man: but
I see an other Lawe in my members, rebelling against the
Lawe of my minde, & leading me captiue, vnto the Lawe of
sinne whiche is in my members. As though he would saie: I re-
sist what I hate: but mine Enemy wil neuer suffer me to rest
he can neuer bee thoughtle and wholly overcome. Thersfore
willingly would I bee deliuered from it; but so can not bee.
My wisde therein auaileth nothing. What shall I then doe?
O wretch that I am (saith he) who shall deliuer me from the
body of this sinne? After the same manner, trie all holie. But
them that are without faith, the Deuill leadeth, and is verie
glad to see continue still in their Spurnes, to frequent and take
delite in their losenesse, and not to care a whit, for entring into
conflict or combat against their Iniquities. As touching such
persons, the Deuill thinketh thus: well, I haue these faithlesse
people through infidelitie, now my captiues and bondslaves.
It will so suffer them to prostrate and continue in these same
iniquities and counsailes, that they shall not committe any
grosse or notorious Sinne, neither will I allayne them with
any vehement temptation; and by other meanes, I will con-
spire to hide their old sinnes to them, and secretly spoure their
old naturall, and secretly lutching. And, being that he
seeth, how euer temptation is greates aliue among, and neuer
are free from downefall caules. What can one do more? faith

Vpon the first Epistle

either feele not temptations at all, or els thei willingly prede-
vnto theim, breaking out into outrageous wickednesse, and
yeloping them selves to the service of their owne vntemperate
affections. But as soone as the Spirit and Faith haue seized
vp the hart man straightwaies seemeth to him self so weake,
so fraile, and so vnstable, that he feareth hymself not to bee able
to quench the least cogitation and sparke of Temptation that
can breake forth in hymself nothing but Synne, from the
croune of his head, to the soale of his foot. For, as soe he wal-
ked as he liste, but now singeth the Spirit hath appeared and
shined, whiche seeketh to cleanse and purifie hym, then there
quickly ariseth a strife betwixt the Deuill, the flesh, and the
Wilde Beeste battaile all at once vnto Faith. And of this be
all the Prophets, in many and sundrie places of the Scriptu-
res complaine. And therefore the meaning of saint Peter is,
that this conflict is not made by Sinners, but by Believers
onely. Again, it comforteth in that it hath in it an hope, to ex-
pell and banishe all concupiscence, if a man doe but resist and
strive against it. If thou bee accumbred with naughty cogita-
tions and thoughtes, yet bee not there with dismayed, neither
despaire for the same, but beware at any hande that thei carie
thee not captiue. The remedie which our Teachers and Doc-
tors haue hitherto taught vs, wherewith to prevent and mee-
te with this incumbrance is: that a Manne afflict and punish
hymself so long, till he feele no more ill thoughtes within hym,
whiche deuide many Doctours, naie rather hauidesse persons
haue and doe vse to put in practise. But learne thou this lesson
that thou being a Christian, shalt doubtlesse feele in thy flesh
dunnes and paines, and wicked motions. For, when thou
arriuest through thy flesh in Faith, thou shalt be afflicted to be
assailed with a thousand twofold cogitations, and a thousand
temptations, more then thou wast afore. But should thou dou-
bte to thy ankerholme and plat the man suffer not thy self to be
cheered with iniquitie, but straightwaies exhort a gainste these
Tumults, and repile into them with as fast as he will, For
the rule here in it and elsewhere teacheth betweene a Christian and
war

ward househonde, and an inquiet scoupyng wife; who are e-
ner larryng and murmuring, one againste the other, so that
whatsoeuer liketh the one, disliketh the other.

For this is a sure note of true Christianisme, when thou
seest thy self neuer to liue in quiet: neither must thou thinke to
be so exempted and priuiledged, as that thou shouldst not feele
Sinnes within thee: for feele thou surely thou dost. But yet
thou must haue suche a feeling of the, as that thou do not with-
all peece thy consent vnto them. And in this respect thou must
bothe faste, praye and labour, that thou maist the better extin-
guishe and subdue thy concupiscences. And therefore thinke
nothing lesse, then that thou canst bee so holie and perfecte, as
these aforesaid doctours surmise, to winne suche a
one, as is without any feeling of Sinne within hym. For so
long as we be cladd with this fleshe and this blood, so long re-
maineth this Synne within vs. And therefore we muste euer
ago continuallie strue and resiste. Who soeuer hath not this
feeling in himself, that man in haue maie boaste himself to be
a Christian.

They hitherto haue taught vs, that whosoever is once pro-
fessed a Souer, is cleare and free from all Sinnes, and that
such an one hath no neede to fight and strue against Sinnes.
Also they affirme, þ Baptisme doth so, eueryly cleanse & wash
awaie all Sinnes, that no remnaunt thereof at all remaineth,
and thereupon haue thought thus with them selues: well, now
shall I bee sure to enioye rest and quietnesse. The Deuill
straightwaies charging vpon them, carkeu them bedlong into
farre worse then afoze they were. Learne therefore here, how
the case in truth standeth. When thou confessest thy Synnes,
and crauest mercie for the same, thou muste thinke with thy
self so to deale, as Souldiours are wont: who a little before the
Battaille, range themselves into order and Partiall arrayes
but when the tyme cometh that the matter is to bee tried by
dent of sword and hand blowes, then (as though all that had
been don afoze, had beene but playes and sportinges) they
huckle themselves to their cooles, drawe their Blades, and co-

Vpon the first Epistle

ragiously slay at the face of the enemy: and so long as the
 conflict endureth, are moste diligently busied in getting the
 conquest ouer the Enemy. Euen so like wise and after the same
 manner, after thou art Baptized, thou must carefully and wa-
 rily looke to thy self, and promise not to thy self so much as
 one houres truce or respite from the Deuill and Synne, or
 that thou shalt be without any securitie: nate rather thinke that
 thou shalt henceforth be thou shalt neuer bee at any rest. And
 therefore the life of a Christian is nothing els but a Battaille
 or a warfare, as the Scripture saith: and therefore the Lorde
 our God is called the Lorde God of Sabaoth, that is, of Ho-
 lies: and in other places, he is named, the Lorde mightie in
 Battaille. Thus he declareth, what a mightie Lorde he is,
 whiche maketh his people wage battaille, and to stande euer
 prest in warlike arape and readinesse, whensoever the Trum-
 pet shall sounde to the ende, they should still thus consider and
 thinke with themselves: stande here, stoppe there: strike the heere,
 undermine there &c. So that here is nothing but a certaine
 perpetuall combat, wherein all thinges must bee assayed, and
 nothing that thou art able to doo, bee left vnattempted, but
 that thou maiest with the Maide of God, ouerthowe and dis-
 comfozte the Deuill. So long therefore as thou liuest here,
 thou must manfully resist, and incessantly praise vnto God, and
 utterly despayre of all humane power or worldly strength.

12 And haue your conuersation honest among the
 Gentiles, that they whiche speake euill of you, as of
 euill doers, maie by your good workes which they
 shall see, glorifie God in the day of visitation.



Hee wee maie see what a precise and exquisite
 order S. Peter obserueth. Whereto he saughe
 vs, what we should doe, to quench and subdue
 the flesh with al the lustes and concupiscences
 thereof. Now hee preibeth a cause, why wee
 oughte so to doe. Wherfore then must I hate my flesh? It

it because I should thereby obtaine Saluation: No; but it is,
to the ende I maye haue an honeste conuersation before the
Almightie. Neither are wee made iust through our honest con-
uersation, but wee must first bee iust and beleue, before wee
beginne any honest and good conuersation. And I am bounde
to the we forthe an honest conuersation, not for mine owne sake
and commoditie, but that the Gentiles maie thereby bee dra-
wen and prouoked to amendement, and (as it were) see euen
thereby winne and allured to come vnto Christ. Which is a
woyke of true loue in deedes: for wee knowe, how that thei both
flaunder, raille and backbite vs, and account of vs no better
then of very leude and naughtie persons: and therefore it stan-
deth vs vpon, to behaue our selues so orderly, honestlie and de-
centlie in our conuersation, that thei being enforced and over-
come by the truth, maie repute and saie: Surely these fello-
wes can not be worthily charged with any notorious wicked-
nesse.

We read, that when the Emperours persecuted the Chri-
stians, thei could burden them with no obvious crime, nor laie
any other thing to their charge, but onely this, that thei wor-
shipped Christ and honoured hym as a God, as maie appere
by certain letters thereof wyttten by Plinio vnto Traiane then
Emperour: wherein hee specifieth that hee could perceiue no
harine nor ill behauiour in the Christians, sauyng onely that
euery morning before daylight, thei assembled together and
sang psalmes vnto their God Christ, and that thei did eate
together, (to wit) the holie Communion or Euchariste: But
from any other misdemeanours, he iudges them to be cleare
and vnnacusable. And therefore (saith saint Peter here in this
place) you must patiently beare, though thei raille and backbite
you as euill doers: but you therefore so much the rather ought
warowlie to looke to your conuersation, and so vnb lame ablie
to liue, that ye giue cause of offence to none. And by this mea-
nes shall you at length, bring them (thus seeing your honest
behaviour) to abandon their former naughtie life, and frame
themselues to a better.

Vpon the first Epistle

12 In the daie of visitation,



On ought so long to suffer this to slander and speake euill of you, vntill the truth of all thinges burst forth and come to light: when thei shall openly beholoe the sinceritie of all your dealinges; and shall plainly see that they haue slandered you, and shall therby beginne to glorifie God in you.

13 Submit you selues vnto all maner ordinance of man for the Lordes sake, whether it bee vnto the King, as vnto the superiours,

14 Or vnto gouernours, as vnto them that are sent of him, for the punishment of euill doers, and for the praise of them that doe well.

15 For so is the will of God, that by well doying ye maie put to silence the ignorance of the foolish men,

16 As free, and not as hauyng the libertie for a clocke of maliciouesnesse, but as the seruantes of God,

17 Honor al men: loue brotherly fellowship: feare God: honour the Kyng.



After this sort proceedeth saint Peter in his orderly methode of teaching vs, how and what maner of persones wee ought to thewe our selues in eche respect. Pitherto he hath reasoned by a generalitie, how in euery severall condition of life, wee should frame our selues and direct our conuersations: now he instructeth and teacheth vs, how wee should behaue our selues towarde the ciuile Magistrate. For, seying he hath already afore declared, first what we are to dooe to God: Secondly, how wee are to deale with our selues, that is to saie, our flesh: now lastly he also teacheth vs what we are to doe and performe to all other Men in generall. This therefore is his meaning: First of all, when you haue performed these vniuersall

vnuerfall and generall dueties, whiche I haue afore layed
downe vnto you, to wit, of walkyng in true fatche towarde
God, and of hydelng and chastising your Bodie, for waxyng
too wanton and lasciuious: the next and chiefest point, whiche
I will and require you vnfeinedly and hartily to perfoyme,
is this, that you be obedient vnto the Magistrate, & vnto the
Lawes set doune by him. For, as the Lawes and Statutes by
GDD enacted, are of vs in all humbleness and reuerence by
laith to be obied: so also there be certayne humane and worldly
Ordinances and decrees (consistynge in Lawes and Pro-
clamations) for the quiet & politique gouernance of the Com-
mon wealthe: vnto whiche Statutes wee also ought to be o-
bedient.

13 Submit your selues vnto all maner-ordinaunce of
man, for the Lordes sake, whether it bee vnto the
Kyng, as vnto the Superiour,

14 Or vnto Gouvernours, as vnto them that are sent of
hym, for the punishment of euill doers, and for the
praise of them that doe well.



E obedience whiche wee in duetie owe vnto the
civile Magistrate, is not (saith saint Peter) for
their owne sakes, but for Gods sake whose childen
we bee. Whiche obedience vnto Magistrate we
are dutifullly to exhibite, and that without hope of any merites
or rewards, for, wharsoeuer it be for Gods sake, that ought
I to doe freely for his sake; inasmuche that there should be no-
thyng whiche I knowe to bee agreeable and consonant to his
will, but I am desirous and most willing both to allowe and
doe the same, And why ought we to obey the Magistrate for
Gods sake? Forsooth, because it is the good wil of God by him
to punish the wicked and euill doers, & to defende, protect and
maintaine the good and vertuous, that thereby Concord may
be established in the world: whiche publicke peace and con-
corde, wee for our partes and abilities are bounde too further

Vpon the first Epistle

as muche as we maie. For, sithens we doe not yett all beleue; but the greater moitie of the worlde. All willeth faith; therfore hath God ordeined and appointed the Magistrate to beare the Sworde: thereby to curbe and restraine the wicked; compelling them (euen maugre their willes) to keepe peace: itt otherwise, men should deuoure, consume and spoyle one another. This office (I saie) of Magistracie he executeth, to the entent the worlde maie in eche parte bee well and quietlie gouerned. Heere wee see, that if there were none euill men, wee should haue no neede of the Magistrate: for hee is (saith saint Peter) for the punishment of euill doers, and for the praise of them that doe well. Thei therfore that doe well and liue orderlie and honestlie, ought at the Magistrates handes to receiue praise: and them ought the Magistrate to censure, preferre and gracie: that others by their example maie bee prouoked, drawe and allured to the like vertue and integritie: not that thou shouldest thinke to reape vnto thy self any mercede at Gods handes for the same. For so saith S. Paule Rom. xij. Power is not to bee feared for good woorkes, but for euill: and therefore if thou wilt bee without feare of the Power, doe well.

15 For so is the will of GOD, that by well doying ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.



In these wordes saint Peter sheweth and reprehendeth those vaine talking persons, that bragge and thinke themselues sufficiently furnished, euen with the bare name and title of Christianitie: and also herein he prouoketh and answereth aforehanke to an obiection which (perhappes) they might alledge, saying: If faith onely bee sufficient to a Christian; and Worshes do not iustifie; why then and for what purpose should we neede to be subiect vnto the Magistrate, & pay Tribute? To this he saith thus muche. Although wee should receiue from the no good or commoditie at all, (yett neuerthelesse)

lesse) wee are bounde euen for Gods sake, freely to performe,
 and willing to yeeld our obedience vnto them, that the iniuri-
 es of the Enemies of God (whiche diffame and slander vs)
 maie be stopped; & that thei maie not be able to speake against
 vs. But bee compelled to confesse that wee are persones harme-
 lesse, dutifull and obedient. After this sort we reade that many
 holie men were slayed vnder heathen Princes, vanquished and
 suboued their Enemies; and in all thinges were subiect and
 seruicable vnto theim; no lesse then wee now are bounde to
 yeeld obedience vnto Christian Magistrates. Doubtless, it is
 now thought of some, that we could not bee Christians, if we
 liued in Turkie in subiection to the Turke. Here now againe,
 maie arise an other doubt of allegation, thus: Christ hath com-
 manded that we should not resist euill: but to hym that strik-
 eth vs on the one Cheeke; we should turne the other; and
 how then (will thei saie) can it bee lawfull for vs to strike and
 kill other sinners? I answer: This was an old objection, which
 the Ethnikes in tymes past allegeded against the Christians,
 saying: that if thei should liue in suche order; their Countries
 and Commonweales would soone bee brought to ruine; and
 bee quickly ouerturne. But wee now vnto these thinges an-
 swere thus: It is true that Christians ought not to resist euill,
 neither to reuenge them selues; but rather to suffer violence
 and wrong, which also is a cause why thei maie not be charge-
 able, burdalous and trouble some to Ethnikes. But by this,
 the Magistrate is not inhibited the Sworde nor iudiciall rep-
 alles, for although thei liue in order, that no man hath any iust
 cause to complaine vpon them, because thei offer wrong to no
 man, but deserue well of all men, and patiently bware wrongs
 euer is doen to them by others: yet because of false and con-
 terfaite Christians, and them that knowe not Christ, these
 thinges (the Sworde and Iudgement) maie be in vs, that
 thei whiche doe hurte and wrong to others; maie be punished,
 whereby publicke tranquillitie maie be maintained: And the
 Goddys maie liue in peace and safete. God that foresaw this, and
 belee his worde, hath iustified and appointed this prophane

Vpon the first Epistle

by civile power, to repress them, which of their owne accord
will not refrain from doyng and offring harme and iniurie
to others: It is manifestly therefore appeareth, that God hath appointed
and instituted the Magistrate, because of them that doe not be-
leeue: And that therefore Christians whiche administer that
function, not onely mose, but also ought to vse the Sword
namely, thereby to relesue their neighbours, to repellng and
punishing malefactours, and in defendyng and mainteyning
the peace, tranquillitie, and safetie of them that bee good and
vertuous: and yet neuer beleste the sayng of Christe standeth
sure, of not resistyng euill.

For although a Christian man beare the Sword, whe-
ther he be a Prince, or any other Magistrate, yet should he na-
uer vse it for hymself, neither should he therewith reuenge
hymself for any private quarell of his owne: But must execute
his place and office for the behoofe of others, and this is the
woorde of Christian loue, with the Sword to defende the
whole Commonwealthe, and not to suffer good men vniustly
to be molested and trauerdoun. Christ gaue and bequeathed
his doctrine to the im onely, that beleue and haue Loue: And
suche dooe thewe forth and expresse the same in their workes.
But sayng that the greater parte of the worlde beleueth not,
neither obserueth this precepte and Commandement, there-
fore it is moste expedient to ouerrule and gouerne them, not
as Christians (for suche they are not) but as Ethnikes and Pa-
gans: and to raise and repress their sensuall and wilfull out-
rages: For other wise, if they should bee suffered to runne be-
long at their owne pleasures, in their disordred loosenesse, and
lawlesse violence, no man should bee able to liue in quietnesse,
and safetie.

Wherefore, there bee twoo sortes of Rule and Dominion
in the worlde: as there bee also maner of twoo sortes to write,
Christians, and non Christians. Christians are gouerned by
the Word of GOD, and those neede not in respect of them
selues any prophane Magistrate. But they that be not Christi-
ans,

ans, haue neede to bee vnder an other power and rule, namelis the Sworde: because thei can not abide to be obedient vnto the Worde of God. But if wee were all Christians, and obedient to the Gospell, wee should not haue any neede at all of the Sworde, or any Civile power. For where there are no misdoers and malefactours, what vse can there be of punishment? Sithe therefore it can not be, that we should all bee goodlie and vertuous, Christe hath committed the euill vnder the rule of Ciuill and Propheane power, that thei mase bee so gouerned, as thei are and ought to bee gouerned. But the Belieuers he hath reserved vnto hymself, whom he gouerneth with his onelie Worde.

Therefore, a Christian Empire is not against the Princelie and Empire of the worde. Neither is Ciuile and Propheane power against Christ: but yet it properlie appertaineth not to the office of Christ, for it is an externall and outward charge, as also all other offices, conditions, and states of men bee. And as these are beside the mere office of Christe, (in so muche that an Infidell and Discreunt maie aswell beare the Office, as a Christian) so is also the office of the Sworde: For it neither maketh nor unmaketh a Christian. But hereof wee haue spoken elsewhere oftentimes more at large.

As free and not as hauing the Libertie of a Cloke of malicioufnesse, but as the Seruauntes of God.



His is peculiarie spoken vnto vs, that haue heard of Christian libertie, and yet dooe not abuse the same: that is, that vnder the colour and name of Christ and Christian libertie, we dooe not commit and dooe what be likest our selues: or that our libertie should brake out into licentious wantonnesse, and carnall loosenesse. As wee see come to passe now in our daies, and reape to haue happened in the tyme of the Apostles themselves, as by the Epistles booke of Saint Peter and Saint Paule, wee maie manifestly gather: for the same

Vpon the first Epistle

was then dooen and practized, whiche now aduies the greater
 sorte of Men vsually committeth. Wee now through the good
 gifte and greete fauour of GOD, dooe againe vnderstande
 and knowe the truthe: And plainly see that all is nothing but
 mere decepte and iugglyng, whiche hitherto by the Pope and
 his Chergie had been taught, established and doen. Our con-
 sciences now (thanks bee vnto God) are deliuered out of the
 snares of humane Traditions, and freed from that violence,
 wherein thei had before entrapped vs: And now are wee made
 free, and not tyed vnder paine of damnation to doe suche thyng-
 es, as thei enioyned and commaunded vs. In this libertie
 we ought so stande, and to maintaine it, neither to suffer our
 selues to be drawen from it: but withall, we are to take heede,
 that wee make not this libertie, a Cloake and pretext of wic-
 ked life. And therefore shamefullie and verie vngodlie hath the
 Pope dealt in this behalfe, in presuming to compell and en-
 force menne by his Lawes: for in a Christian people there nei-
 ther ought neither can bee a compulsion of any good thyng.
 For straightwaies decayeth and falleth doune Faith and all
 Christianitie, when the Conscience is bounde with externall
 Rites, and outward Constitutions. For, Christians must be
 ledde and gouerned by the Spirit, that thei maie knowe first,
 how that by Faith thei already possesse all thynges necessa-
 rie, and appertaining to their saluation, and haue neede of no-
 thyng els for the obtaining thereof: and next, to knowe, that
 thei ought to employe and addicte their industries and en-
 deuours to nothing els, but to helpe, serue, & relieue their neigh-
 bours with all that thei can or maie, euen as Christe hath hol-
 pen, succoured, and relieved them. And that whatsoeuer good
 thei thus shewe vnto the, thei doe it freely, frendly, and with-
 out compulsion: And that all thynges maie flowe and spring
 from a welwillyng and chearfull harte, that humble thanketh
 God, and praiseth his holie name, for all his gracious giftes,
 so largely and bountifullly powred vpon them. Vnto this pur-
 pose serueth that saying of sainte Paule, i. Timoth. i. where he
 thus writeth: The Lawe is not giuen to the righteous: For
 thei

thei that be suche, doe all thyng es freely, willingly, and without either constraint or commaundement, that thei knowe to bee allowed and agreable vnto the good will and pleasure of God. Now, these carnall, irreligious, faithlesse, and counterfeit Christians, knowing the bondes of humane Traditions to bee broken, and hearing true Christian libertie preached, come steppng in, and vaunte themselves for iollie Christians, in that thei professe themselves not to obserue and keepe the Popes lawes, pretending for their excuse, Christian libertie, and that thei are not hereunto tied and bound: and yet in the meane season omitte, and leaue vndoene those thynges, whiche true Christian libertie requireth, to witte, chearfull and vncstrained helppng of their neighbor in all thynges to the uttermoste of their abilitie, without respecte of any Commaundement: whiche to doe, all true Christians endeouour themselves: therefore, thei making Christian libertie onely a Cloake for their filthie and wicked impuritie, doe disgrace and pollute the precious name and excellent title of Libertie, whiche agreeth onely to true Christians.

This doeth sainct Peter in this place forbid vs to doe: and this is the effecte and meanyng of his speeches, as though he should saie thus: Although in all outward and external thynges ye be free, because you are Christians, and ought not to be compelled by the lawe to obey the Magistrate, for that the law is not made for the righteous and iuste, as before is declared: yet ought you (neverthelesse) to doe so, willingly, vncstrained, and not as by necessitie enforced, but euen for the loue that you beare to GOD, and for the benefite of your neighbours. This we read, Marth. vij. that Christ hymself did, when as he beeryng free, and Lorde of all, did (notwithstanding) paie Tribute of Holle money. So also obeyed he Pilate, and suffered hymself to bee Judged of hym, whereas (notwithstanding) he in the verie same place testified and saied vnto him, Thou couldest haue no power at all against me, except it were giuen thee from aboue: by whiche wordes he expressely and hartly confirmeth Magistracie and Power: But he yet submit-

Vpon the first Epistle

ted himself therunto, because it so pleased his heavenly Father: and that not forcoolie or by compulsion.

¶ We see by this, that these pernitie counterfeites, contemning aswell the thynges that please GOD, as the thynges whiche the worlde requireth; and still persistynge in their wilfull waies and corrupte Judgements, haue no right vnderstanding nor knowledge what Christia libertie meaneth, bragge thei neuer so much of their Religio, & vaunt thei theselues neuer so glorioullie vnder the shewes and titles of the Gospell. ¶ We are (in dede) freed from all Lawes, howbeit it is of vs necessarily required; that withall wee helpe and relieue the weak and unskillfull Christians; our brethren: whiche is the verie office of Love. ¶ Wherevpon Saint Paule Rom. xiiij. saith thus: Owe nothing to any man, but this, that ye Love one an other. ¶ He therefore that would boaste of Christian Libertie, muste firste performe and doe the partes and office of a Christian to witte, to love and helpe his neighbour; and then afterward vse Christian Libertie after this sorte. If Pope or any other whatsoeuer, would compell and tye hym vnto their Lawes, and to enioyne hym by commaundement to doe this or that, he maie saie againe: Sir, I will not dooe that whiche you glue vnto me in commaundement to doe, and for none other cause, but for that you would binde me thereunto by commaundement: and by taking awaie from me Christian Libertie, to impose a necessitie on me: wee must deale and doe freely as the Seruauntes of GOD, and not as the Seruauntes of Men, as here in this place saint Peter teacheth vs. But if any man whom I might thereby benefite, should require any suche thyng at my handes, I am (willingly and of myne owne accord) to doe it: not respectyng, whether it bee a commaundement or no: But onely consideryng and waighyng, that whether he love requireth the same at my handes, and assuring my self, that it is a thyng right acceptable and pleasaunte to Almighty GOD, by suche seruice and dueties to helpe my brother. By the same reason, and for the same causes I will not bee compelled and enforced, to obaie ciuile and prophane Magistrates,

giftes, but yet I will willingly and of myne owne accord
obey the: not because thei them selues so exacte and demaunde
it, but because it tendeth and serueth to the commoditie and be-
nefite of my neighbour. To this ende ought all our wordes
to be framed, that thei maie issue and proceede from a willing
and louyng mynde, and that thei maie be profitable and a-
uaileable to our neighbours.

17 Honour all men.

This is no Commandement, but an Exhortation.
For we owe honour vnto all men, although we be
free, because this Libertie ought to be readily denie
al waies to doe good, and not to doe euill. Afore wee shewed in
many places, that euery Christian by and through faith, is
possessed of all those thynges, whiche are Christes: and is also
made and become his Brother: and therefore euen as I owe
all manner of honour vnto Christe, so likewise muste I honour
my neighbour. But thou maiest not thinke, that this honour
consisteth in outward gestures, as bowyng doune thy bodie, or
in coueryng thy heade before him: but rather in thy harte, with
all unfained sinceritie to reuerence hym, loue hym, and highly
esteem hym: euen as Christ hymself is to bee reuerenced, lo-
ued, and highly esteemed of the. Moreover, wee are the Tem-
ple of God, as sainte Paule saith: 1. Cor. iij. Because the holie
Ghost dwelleth in vs. Wee therefore shau haue been so realie
caried and leaue to a superstitious bowyng of the knee before
the Idolatrous Host (as thei teache it) or before the Image
of a wooden Crosse, whi should wee not muche more fall
doune and he we obsequie before hym that is the lively Te-
mple of God?

After the selfe same maner S. Paule Rom. xij. exhorteth vs,
that in giuyng honour, one should goe before an other, so
that euery one should be subiect and humble himself vnto ano-
ther, and preterre an other before himself. The giftes that are
giuen vnto vs of God, are vnequall; so that one surmounteth
an

Vpon the first Epistle

an other in dignitie and preeminence of place and calling, yet no man knoweth who is the highest in the sight of God. For he is able to raise by hym which in this world is the abjectest: and from a moste seely estate, to aduance hym to the highest degree. And therefore every one (though here in this world he be placed in neuer so high calling) ought to detect and humble himself, and to yeeld honour vnto his neighbour.

17 Loue brotherly fellowshipe,



We declared afoze, how the Apostles make a greate difference betwene Common loue and Brotherly loue. Our dutie is, to loue euery our Enemies, and this belougeth to Comon loue. But Brotherly loue is that, whereby we Christians loue one an other, euery as Brethren, seeking one an other commodities, and not our owne: because wee haue all alike good giftes giuen vnto vs from God. And this Loue is that, which Sainct Peter here in this place peculiarly requi-

17 Feare God, Honour the Kyng.

He biddeth vs not onely to make greate account of, and highly to reuerence the Bishops and Rulers of the Earth, but withall also to honour them, yea although they bee Ethnikes and Heathen. Which thing bothe Christ hymself did, and the Prophetes also, who persecuted themselves at the feete of the Kynge of Babylon. Here might one saie to mee: Lo, thou seest, that by this place, we ought to obey the Pope, and euery one ought to fall downe and prostrate himself at his feete. I answer: True it is, that if he usurped and tooke vpon hym a ciuile or prophane power, or did requyre the place of any Temporall Magistrate or worldly Ruler, he were (doubtlesse) to bee obeyed. As for example, if he should thus saie: I commaunde thee to weare a Hood, or to shawe thy Croune

Croume of thy head, or vpon this or that daie to faste: not that thou shouldest beleue that God any whit regarded or cared for the same, or that any parte thereof were necessarie to thy Saluation, but therefore doe I commaunde thee to doe it, because I being the Civile Magistrate and Iudicall Iudice, am so mynded to haue it dosen. But then as hee shall (as hee doeth) plaie the Tyaunt after this sorte: I being Gods Vicegerent here on Earth, and his onely Vicegerent, commaunde thee to obserue, keepe and embrace this my Commaundement, no other wise then as if God himself by expresse wordes did commaunde it, and this vnder paine of Excommunication and deadly Sinne. Then maiest thou saie: Bee fauourable to mee Sir Pope: hold me excused: for truly, I meane nothing lesse then to performe and dooe that whiche thus thou proudly and presumptuously commaundest.

We are bounden to bee subject vnto the higher Powers and to obeye their ordinaunces, so long as they binde not our consciences: I meane, so long as they impose any thing vpon vs concerning outward and worldlie thinges, yea although they plaie the partes of very Tyauntes towarde vs. For, to him that taketh a waie our Coate, we are commaunded to let hym haue our Cloake also. But when they entermaine and take vpon them to raigne ouer the Soules, and to leaue alway our Conscience captiue, wherein God alone ought to stand and raigne, then ought we rather to offer our heades to the block, then any whit to obeye them in suche payntes. The ciuill Magistrate and this externall Emper, hath power ouer no further but externall and corporall thinges. But the Pope hath not onely violently challenged vnto hym and soeably intruded vpon this externall power and outward Jurisdiction but also goeth about to rake, cathe and challenge vnto him, the Spirituall also: whereas in deede he hath right to neither of them bothe. He keepeth a greace coyle, and seereth vnto his holy commaundements, Rules, Lawes and Ordinaunces for Synneparall, for choise of meates, for Colleges, Abbayes, Priories, Bishopricks, and Benefices. He staileth not here, but goeth on

N.

further,

Vpon the first Epistle

further, and copeth out of these, bothe Synnes, and good woorkes; and therefore Christ can not abide suche a monstrous Emptier and meane Domination. But this externall or outward Government, whereby the Cload is ruled, hee bothe liketh and alloweth: for that, it neither blurpeth nor enseruedeth any thing with Synnes, or good Woorkes and other spirituall dealings; but dealeth altogether in externall and outward Policies: as the mainteinance, defence, and fortification of Cities, building and making of Bridges, appointing and assaying of Tributes, Recette of Reuenues, maintaining and continuing of peace, defending their Territories, Liberties and Dominions, and setting order for punishment of Missetours and Offebours. Therefore, eche Christian man without daunger (safe, willingly and of his owne accord, not compulsiuely and forcible) ought to peeble his obedience vnto suche a Prince, in as much as he chalengereth no authoritie ouer his Conscience.

Therefore now, if eather Emperour, King or Prince should aske mee what my Faith is, I ought plainly to confesse and proesse the same vnto him: not for any his commaundement: but for that, I otherwise am bounde to confesse my Faith openly before all men, as often as occasion is offered. Now, if he should proceede further with me, commaunding me to beleue this wane or that wane: then muste I saie after this sorte vnto hym. Noble Prince, your charge is in respect of an externall Principalltie and Empire, looke well to that: your authoritie reacheth not to encernedle with the Kingdome of God: it is not lawfull for you to enroache vpon the same, nay to blaspheyme vnto your selfe that which belongeth to him aloine; and therefore heerein I maie not obeye you. For I can not well abide, that any other should challenge any right vnto him selfe within any of your Dominions: yea, if he should but onely passe throug the ranks of your Watchmen, setting them at naught, as though they had noe to deale with hym; you would I saie (I am sure) put the such a one with Canes, Clauies, and other sorte of partiall prouision. And howe then can you think, that

that GOD will suffer you, to attempt to pull him out of his
Seate, and to set your self in his place: Sainct Peter calleth
here the ciuill Magistrate, onely the Ordinaunce of man, and
therefore their authoritie stretcheth not (as of themselves) to e-
dict and commaunde any thing vpon the Statutes of God
and pointes of our faith.

¶ **S**eruaunts, be subiect to your maisters with al feare,
not onely to the good & courteous, but also to the
froward.

¶ **19.** For this is thankeworthie, if a man for conscience
sake towards God endure griefe, suffering wrongfully.

¶ **20.** For what praise is it, if when ye bee buffeted for
Christ to your faultes, ye take it patiently? but and if when
ye doe well, ye suffer wrong and take it patiently,
that this is acceptable to God.

Sainct Peter hath taught vs, how we
should be subiect vnto the ciuill Magistrate, and
what honour we ought to giue vnto the same.

In the discourse whereof wee haue declared,
how farre it extendeth, and both the same Ma-

gistrates are not to stretche their authoritie further then their
limited Commission, neither to ouerrule matters of faith.

All which is spoken of Magistrates to generall, and therefore
this doctrine appertaineth vnto all. Now he speaketh of suche

Magistracie as appertaineth to the whole Commonwealth,
but to certaine private persons: And first of all, how a fami-

lie ought to be gouerned, and how Seruautes in an house
holde ought to beare and be haue their duties towards their

Maisters. The meaning of all which his wordes in effect is
this.

Seruautes both men and women, are Christians as well
as others, hauing one and the same Woide, one faith, one

Baptisme, & all other benefites besides, as well as any others:
and therefore in the sight of God are nothing inferior to any

other.

Vpon the first Epist'e

other. Onely here in this worlde, in this externall and t'porall life there is some difference, for in that respecte they are of lesse account and estimation, and therein beeyng inferiours and vnderlinges, they are bounde to waite and obeye. Therefore, seeing that God hath called them to that estate, they ought so to frame and enture themselves in their duties, that they shew their subiection and testifie their submission vnto their Masters, honour them; reuerence them; be seruiceable vnto them, and carfullie looke to their dealinges and businesse. Wherevpon the Prophete Dauid Psalm. Cxliij. becomyng from them a very apt and proper similitude, signifieth thereby how diligently they ought to attende vnto their Masters and Mistresses: As the eyes of the Seruauntes looke vnto the handes of their Masters, and as the eyes of a Maiden vnto the handes of her Maistresse, so do our eyes waite vpon the Lord our God: which is as muche to saie, as Seruauntes and waiting Maids ought with submission and feare to doe what soeuer maie please their Master and Mistresse. God requirerh it, and therefore they ought with cheerefull and willing myndes to doo it. What which thou thus doest acolyng to the Willes of God and of his Word assured is acceptable and allowed of God: And therefore these are the best workes of al others that a man can doo: so that a man maie here perceiue that he needeth not to goe farr to doo other Workes. What thy Master commaundeth his Seruaunt, or the Mistresse her Maide, that hath God commaunded to be doon of her. Think it not to be the bare commaundement of man, although it be decreed and doon by man. And therefore thou oughtest not to consider and respect, what manner a Master he is, whom thou seruest; whether he be good or badde, gentle and courteous, warre and churche; but thinke this rather, what manner a Master soeuer he bee, yet is it my duety truely and faithfullie to serue hym, and diligently to applye my self in his businesse, and that for Gods sake, who requirerh the same at my handes: remembryng also that my Lorde Iesus Christe for his redemption and freedom of me, became a Seruaunt.

This is the true doctrine of life, whiche ought continually
 to bee inculked and beaten into the heaues of all men: but alas,
 the blindnesse of our age is so greate, that it is now almost
 almost quight abolished and vetterlie extincte. And this doctrine
 is of suche soyte, that none can well embrace and like of it, sa-
 uing onely true Christians, who haue their lesson for the same,
 out of the Gospell. And therefore if thou wilt be the true child
 of God, frame thy mynde so to serue thy maister, as if Christe
 hymself were present, and commaunded thee euery particuler
 charge to doe. For so writeth sainte Paule Ephes. vj. Seruaun-
 tes, bee obedient vnto them that are your Maisters, accord-
 dyng to the fleshe, with feare and trembling, in singlenesse
 of your hartes, as vnto Christe, not with seruice to the eye, as
 men pleasers, but as the seruauntes of Christ, doying the will
 of GOD from the harte, with good will seruyng the Lorde
 and not men. And againe, Colos. iij. For ye serue the Lorde
 Christe. Oh that our Honkes and Nunnes now adies were
 in that state, that these poore Seruauntes are, what ioye might
 thei haue in their consciences, and to giue God thanks for his
 benefites? There is neuer a one of them that can truly saie:
 God hath commaunded me to beare a Masse, to sing Mattins,
 to mumble vp the Seuen houres, or suche like Trumperies:
 For there is not so muche as one woorde thereof spoken in all
 the Scriptures. And therefore if thei should bee asked, whe-
 ther thei bee assured and out of all doubte, that their profession
 and condition bee allowed of GOD: thei will aunswere, No.
 But if a man should aske any poore mollyng Kitchin boydge,
 why he wetherh Dishes and Platters, or why he Wilteth
 Kine, he can yelde reason and saie. Sir, I knowe that the
 thyng whiche I doe, is acceptable and allowed of God: For I
 haue the woorde of God, and his expresse commaundemente
 for my warraunte, that I ought to doe these thynges. This is
 surely a singuler comforte, an excellent benefite, and a right
 precious treasure, of the whiche no man can well thinke hym-
 self worthy. The Prince maie thinke hymself an happie man,
 and highlie in Gods fauour, if vpon like confidence and truste

Vpon the first Epistle

of a sure commaundement of God, he can throughly discharge and execute his waighthe Office and Function. And truelle he maie in his high calling doe that, which God hath commaunded: Mainelie, if he punish the transgressours and malefactours. But when alas, yea, how seldome happeneth it, that he rightly and lawfullie is able throughly to execute this his chargeable office? But in this condition and state of seruage, all changes are in that sorte, that poore Seruaques certainly knowe and are throughly assured that all the things, which either doe at their Masters commaundementes, are allowed and accepted before God. For God respecteth not the basenesse and vilenesse of the woorker, but regardeth the harte, that in suche vile drudging labours is obedient vnto him. But it happeneth and falleth out in this case, as in al other matters it vsuallie doeth: For, looke what God commaundeth, that is no man willing to doe: But that which men establish and commaunde and not God: that (I saie) every one seeketh after and followeth:

But here will some peradventure saie: what if I haue suche a frowarde, testie, wayward, and angrie Master, whom no manne can please, nor any seruice can conserue, of whiche sorte there are not a fewe euerywhere? Saint Peter herewith directeth a plaine aunswere, in effecte as if he should saie thus: If thou bee a Christian, and bee desirous to please GOD; thou must not respecte how wayward and churlish thy Master is: But consider rather and euer beare in mynde, what the Lorde thy God commaundeth thee. Therefore thinke this with thy self: well, in this my seruice I shall serue my Lorde Christ: he requireth at my handes, that I should bee obedient, seruiceable, and in eche respecte dutifull to my Master, bee he neuer so frowarde, stullen, and inquiete. If God should commaunde thee to wipe the Shoes of the errantest verlett, or Delictifell Rakehell in the woorker, thou buydest with a chearfull harte, and willing mynde to doe it: and this woorker of thine should bee bothe good and laudable before GOD, and so is any other woorker whatsoeuer, of the like sorte, to bee accounted right excellent and commendable: for that, God hath commaunded it,

it. And therefore in this case respecte not the persone, but consideronely the good will and pleasure of GOD, and what he willet to bee done. Thy duetie and seruice in this sort, truly and fasthullie performe, shall before God farre surpass and excell all the woorkes and merites of all Shauelyng Priests and mumblyng Monkes in the worlde, if thei were all layed together on one heape. If there bee any that thinketh not this sufficiente, in that, it is so pleasaunte and acceptable a woork before God: it shall not muche auaille to vse any further reasons to perswade hym. For there is nothing better, if thou doe, is: nothyng worse if thou forslowe and omit it. And therefore (saith sancte Peter) this must with all feare bee performed, and all thynges must orderly and duely bee executed, seeing that it is the commaundement not of man, but of God hymself.

And saint Peter doubtlesse in this place, peculiarly speaketh of suche Seruautes, as maye were in his tyme, to wit, Slaues, suche as in some Countreies yet to this daie, are bought and solde, like brute Beastes. These were euill entreated, and oftentimes whipped and beaten by their Maisters, who safely and without any daunger of law, when thei list, might kill and put them to death. And therefore it was needefull, that such Apostles as S. Peter was, should diligently admonishe and comfort them, to be contented duetifullie to seque their scrounyng and wayward Maisters, and to beare those iniuries, where with thei were rigorously handled. For every one that is a Christian, must needes beare his Crosse: and the more that he is pynched with iniuries, the better fareth his case. Therefore take by this kinde of Crosse willingly, hartely thankyng God for the same: for this is that verie true affliction that pleaseth GOD. For what should it profite or auaille thee, if when thou arte buffeted, and shrewdly beaten for thy desertes, thou shouldest boaste and bragge of suffering the Crosse? And thereupon it is, that sainte Peter here saith: If when ye doe well, ye suffer wrong and take it paciency, this is thanke worthis and acceptable to God, that is a true obedience unto God, and a pleasyng worship. Behold here plainly described

Vpon the first Epistle

described and set out vnto thee, those true and excellent woordes, whiche thou oughtest to doe, and yet we foolish men haue set at naught, and troden vnder our feete this good and wholesome doctrine, and in stead thereof haue deuised, and founde out for our selues other good woordes, inuented by our owne braines and phantasies, of whiche wee make such speciall account, that we thinke we can neuer sufficientlie and enough, extoll, praise, and dignifie the. Wee therefore that are now deliuered out of this blindness, and are taught againe, whiche be the true and right woordes, that please God, let vs with handes holden by to heauen, yeelde most humble thankes vnto God for this so greate a benefite, and let vs hartily and entirely reioyce in the Lorde for the same.

- 21 For here vnto ye are called: for Christe also suffered for vs, leauyng vs an example, that ye should followe his steppes.
- 22 Who did no synne, neither was there guile founde in his mouth.
- 23 Who when he was reuiled, reuiled not again: when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed it to hym that iudgeth righteously.
- 24 Who his owne self bare our Synnes in his bodie on the Tree, that wee beyng deliuered from sinne, should liue in righteousnesse: by whose stripes ye were healed.
- 25 For ye were as sheepe goyng astray: but are now returned vnto the Shepheard and Bisshope of your Soules.



Hence vnto (saith Sainte Peter) ye are called. Vnto what is that? Forsoothe to suffer persecution, trouble and wrong, euen as Christ him self afore you hath dooen. As though he should thus further saie. If thou wilt bee a true follower of Christe, it is not fitt, decent, nor agreeable to thy profession,

fellon, when thou art intreated, to blybde much; and repine
thereat, but patiently to bome it; and to take it well in worth;
considering how innocent the Christe suffered all thynges for
our sakes. He did notther exclaime, neicher crye out for venge-
aunce, neither cursed, when he guiltlesse was brought before
the Iudge: and therfore thou must also not here looks alwaies
to bee iustlie dealt withall, but as it were whollie to neglecte,
and not to care, how indifferently and rightlie Iustice in this
respect is ministred vnto thee: but when thou haste wrong of-
fred thee, saie rather to thy wronge: I thanke GOD, heere into
am I called, that I should suffer wrong. For why should I
complaime, sicke Christe my Lorde and Sautour (who was
guiltlesse and innocent euery waye) complained not? And here
hath Sainte Peter alledged certaine woordes, out of the liij.
Chapter of Esaie the Prophete, where it is thus saied that
He had committed no wickednesse; neither was any guile
founded in his mouthe. And these woordes By whose stripes
ye were healed, mentioned also in the same Chapter. ver. v.
Christe was so pure, that there was not so much as one euill
woorde in his tongue: he was worthy to haue had all honoure
at their handes, he deserved to bee kneeled vnto, and (as it
were) to bee carried in the armes of all menne. If hee had
power and auctoritie enough to haue reuenged hymself, if it
had so pleased hym: but he suffered hymself rather to bee reui-
led, mocked, blasphemed, and laste of all, to receiue death, and yet
not once opened he his mouthe. Why therfore shouldest thou
bee any whitte vnwilling, to suffer persecution and wrong,
sith thou art nothyng but Synner? Thou shouldest rather har-
tillie thanke God, and higblie extoll his gracious goodnesse,
who hath accompted thee worthy to bee like to his Christe:
and not to repine and mutter, nor to bee vnpatient, when thou
art wronged, seeing that the Lorde hymself, neuer reuenged
nor threatened againe; but earnestly prayed for his Enemies.
But thou wilt peraduenture saie: Shall I followe and chaunge
well of them that deale furiously with me, and saie that
wherein they doe well? I answer: No. But saie rather thus

Vpon the first Epistle

in thine harte: although I haue not deserued this hard dealing,
nor to bee thus wrongfully entreated; yet will I willingly
suffer these thynges for my Lorde God his sake, who being
moste innocent, was for my sake euill entreated, and moste
wrongfully deale withall. Commit thy cause to God, who is
a righteous Iudge, and he will abundantly recompence all
thy sufferynge: euen as Christ committed his cause vnto his
Father in heauen. Who his owne self (saith Sainete Peter)
offered vp our Synnes in his bodie on the Tree; that is, he suf-
fered death not for any cause of his owne, but for our sake, and
for our Saluation, whom we through our Synnes, crucified
and nailed on the Crosse. But alas, wee are yet verie farre
frome suche kinde of sufferynge wrong. And therefore if thou be
a sinner and a true Christian, thou muste imitate Christe in
this point, and bee hartely sorie for them that hurte thee, pray-
ing earnestly for the unto almightie God; that it maie please
hym to forgive them, and not to punishe them for the same.
For (alas) they doe more hurte thereby to them selues in their
Soule, then they doe harme to thee in thy Bodie. This if thou
thoroughly consider, and in harte rightly waigh, thou shalt not
choole but be presently eased of all inward grief, and willing-
ly suffer all thynges with patience. And finally wee are to re-
member, that wee our selues as well as they, a little afore ledde
a wicked life, but are now at length turned vnto Christe, as
sainct Peter in the knittynge vp of this Chapter saith.

25 For ye were as sheepe goyng astraye: but are now
returned vnto the sheepherde and bishop of your
soules.



AND this place also hath bee taken out of Esay,
Chapter. liij. where he saith thus: All wee like
sheepe haue gone astray: wee haue turned
euery one to his owne waie. But now saith
sainct Peter, wee haue gotten a sheepherde.
The Sonne of God is come downe for our sakes, to bee our
sheepherde.

Sheepeheard and our Bishopp: her by giuing vnto vs his Spirit, feedeth vs, and so guideth & leadeth vs by his Word, that wee are now certaine and sure of our Saluation. Therefore, if thou acknowledge and confesse that thy Sinnes are cleane washed and taken away by him, thou art his Sheepe, and hee is thy Sheepeheard, and thy Bishopp. This is the greatest comfort that all Christians haue.

Thus haue wee fullie finished two Chapters of this Epistle: wherein Saint Peter hath firste laied doune and plainly taught the Sinceritie of Faith; and secondarily the sincere workes of Loue: and herein also hath hee treated of three sortes of Woorke: namely aswell of those woorke which wee are all bounde in generalitie to shewe vnto the Magistrate, as also those woorke that Seruauntes owe vnto their Masters. And what saint Peter here speaketh of Seruauntes, the same

also appertaineth vnto certaine other sortes of men; namely, Artificers, Hirelinges, and all sortes of mercenarie Seruauntes whiche euer. Now, next he saith doune lessens, how man and wife shoulde Christianly liue together.



The third Chapter.



Like wise let the wiues be subiect to their
houſe bandes, that euen thei which obey
not the worde, may without the worde
bee wonne by the conuerſation of the
wiues,

2 While thei behold your pure con-
uerſation, whiche is with feare.

3 Whole apparelling, let it not be outwarde, with broy-
ded haire, and golde put about, or in putting on of apparell.

4 But let the hid man of the harte, bee vncorrupt with a
meeke and quiet ſpirite, which is before God a thyng much
ſet by.

5 For euen after this manner in time paſt did the holy wo-
men, whiche truſted in GOD, tier themſelues; and were
ſubiect to their huſbandes.

6 As Sara obeyed Abraham, and called hym, Sir: whoſe
daughters ye are, whiles ye doe well, not beyng aſtraide of
any terrors.

7 Likewise ye houſbandes, dwell with them as men of
knowledge, giuyng honour vnto the woman as vnto the
weaker veſſell, euen as thei which are heires together of the
grace of life, that your praiers bee not interrupted.

8 Finally be ye al of one minde: one ſuffer with an others
loue as brethren: be pitiful be courteous.

9 Not rendering euill for euill, with rebuke for rebuke:
but contrariwiſe bleſſe, knowing that ye are thereunto cal-
led, that ye ſhould be heires of bleſſing.

10 For if any man long after life, and to ſee good dayes,
let him reſtraine his tongue from euill, and his lippes that he
ſpeake no guile.

11 Let him eſchewe euill and doe good: let hym ſeek
peace, and followe after it.

12 For the eyes of the Lorde are ouer the righteous, and his cares are open vnto their praier: & the face of the Lorde is vpon them that doe euill.

13 And who is it that will harme you, if ye followe that which is good?

14 Notwithstanding blessed are ye, if ye suffer for righteousness sake. Yea, feare not their feare, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctifie the Lorde God in your heartes; and be ready alwaies to giue an answer to euery man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, and that with meeke-nesse and reuerence.

16 Hauyng a good conscience, that when they speake euill of you as of euill doers, they maie bee ashamed, which slander your good conuersation in Christe.

17 For it is better (if the will of God be so) that ye suffer for well doying, then for euill doying.

18 For Christe also hath once suffered for sinnes, the iust for the vniust, that he might bring vs to God, and was put to death concerning the flesh, but was quickened in the spirite.

19 By the which he also went, and preached vnto the spirites that are in prison.

20 Which were in tyme passed disobedient, when once the long sufferiing of God abode in the daies of Noe, while the Arke was preparing, wherein fewe, that is, eight soules were saued in the water.

21 To the which also the figure that now saueth vs, euen Baptisme agreeth (not the puttyng awaie of the filth of the flesh, but in that a good conscience maketh request to God) by the resurrection of Iesus Christ.

22 Which is at the right hande of God, gone into hea-
uen, to whom the Angels, and Powers, and Mighte are sub-
iect.

23 Likewise

Vpon the first Epistle

ba. 1 Likewise let the wiues bee subiecte to their Hous-
 bandes, that euen thei whiche obey not the word,
 maie without the woorde bee wonne by the con-
 uersation of the wiues.

2 While thei behold your pure conuersation, which
 is with feare:



Quinte Peter in this place, namely speaketh of
 those Wives, whiche in his tyme had beleue-
 upng House bandes: and again, of suche faithfull
 Housebandes, as yet had Heathen and Churche
 wiues. For, it oftentimes happened in those
 daies, that the Apostles preached the Gospel among unbelie-
 uing Pagans and Infidels: among whom it was often said
 that the one of the parties, to witte, either the Housebande or
 the Wife, was converted and worne unto Christ, the other
 still wallowing and persisting in error. Now, in this charge
 of Wives subiection and obedience to their hus-
 bandes, were so straightly commaunded then, how much more is it behou-
 full and necessarie to performe, and the we it forth now to adde.
 The office therefore of a Wife, (saith saint Peter) is this, to
 bee loyall and subiecte to her Housebande, yea, though he bee
 an Infidell and a Heathen. And here he inferreth the cause
 why it is conuenient and behoufull so to doe.

3 That euen thei whiche obeye not the worde, maie
 without the woorde bee wonne, by the conuersa-
 tion of the wiues.



When the Housebande seeth that his Wife liueth
 orderly, innocently, and honestly, he is thereby
 moued and prouoked to embrace the like Chri-
 stian faith and godlinesse. And albeit, the of-
 fice of preachyng bee not committed, nor alle-
 wed vnto Women, yet ought thei neuerthelesse, so honestly to
 demean and behaue themselves in maners and conuersation,
 that euen thereby thei may allure and drawe their Houseban-
 des

des vnto faith. Alice reade, that the vertuous Matron Monica, Moother vnto sainte Augustine, conuerter her house and allie asfor his deat, vnto the faith of Christ: and after that her Sonne Augustine also. But wee must note, that this is an externall office and outward charge, not to bee doen of any woman, with intent thereby to bee iustified. For, by all this obedience shall not a woman bee saued. For, euen among the Heathen Infidelles, wee maie finde some Wives in eche respecte verie duectfull, seruicable and debonaire to their housebandes: but that obedience of theirs, raught no farther then to content, serue, and please their housebandes. For, so did God ordaine and appointe Genes. iij. when he saied to the woman: Thou shalt be subiecte to thy Housebande, and he shall rule ouer thee: whiche is one of the punishments, that God there inflicted and laied vpon Women. But yet this is (as I saied asfor) appertaining to ourward conuersation, and belongeth to the bodie, not to the Spirit.

Women haue here greate cause to reioyce, in that, they knowe, what they ke to doe, to please God withall. For, this is suche a greate treasure, as a wife can not haue a greater, nor moze precious: in that, she certainly knoweth, that when she sheweth suche subiection and obedience to her housebande, she highlie pleaseeth God therewith, and doeth that, whiche to hym is right acceptable: then whiche knowledge and persuasion, what can betide vnto her moze ioyfull and glad some? And therefore, she that is desirous to bee a right Christian wife, let her thus thinke with her self: I will not respect, what manner of persone my housebande is, with whom I am now coupled in mariage, whether he bee Jewe or Gentile, good or badde: but I will giue my self to this consideration and respecte onely, that God hath appointed me to bee this manies Wife, and linked me vnto hym in the bandes of Patrimoine, and therefore, as I am bounde, so will I in all pointes bee subiecte and obedient vnto hym. This persuasion beeyng once throughe ferced in her, liuyng in suche duectfull obedience, all her Worsheps bee bothe acceptable and commendable.

If any be so wilfull and malitious, whom these reasons doe not moue, to suche a one (doubtlesse) no other persuasions will be auailable. By beating, a man shall doe no good, if he thinke thereby to bring his wife to be tractable and dutifull: for in casting out one Deuill by beating, he shall bee sure to beate in twoo as badde or worse, as in our common Pro- uerbe we are wont to saie: That Wines throughlie knewe this doctrine, and exhortation of Sainte Peter: how happily and blessedlie should thei liue? But our peruerse and crooked Nature is suche, that what God commaundeth, none are wil- ling to followe, but what mannes sole braine deuise, after that men runne headlong. Furthermore, God hath willed this Commaundement of wiues obedient subiection to their hous- bandes, to bee so firmly and inuiolable obserued, that he hath graunted power and auctoritie to the house bandes, to dissolue, vndo, disallowe, and to make frustrate and of none effecte any bondes made by their wiues, if thei mislike the same: As wee read Num. xxx. And that for none other cause, but to liue ther- by at home in peace, quietnesse, and tranquillitie. And thus muche firste, of the office and dutie of Wines towards their Housebandes: now next the Apostle setteth downe, how a Wife ought to behaue her self towards all others.

3. Whose apparelling let it not be outward, as with broided haire, and golde put aboute, or in putting on of apparell:

4. But let the hiddeman of the harte bee vn corrupte, with a meeke and quiet Spirit, whiche is before God a thing muche set by.

His treasure and inward garnishment, we maie not thinke here to be commaunded and prescribed onely for Wines, but the same stricthly ought to bee construed, as ment also of Men. Here maie some aske this question: Whether these sayings of Sainte Peter, concernyng Womens apparell, be straitly com-
maunded

maunded or no: Wee reade of Queene Esther, how that she ware a Crowne of gold on her head, and putte on her roiall apparelle that was very rich, precious, and meete for a Queene: Esth. ij. and. v. Iudith also apparailled her selfe moste hyauellie and magnificently, Iud. x. But in bothe places we finde it thus explained, that thei did it not for any vaine desite that thei had therein, but rather that thei contemned, and little esteemeu that gorgeous furniture, whiche thei did weare but for the tyme, the better to compasse and hyng aboute their godlie and zealous purposes. The same aunswere maie wee make here. That it is the duetie of eche godlie woman, to bee in mynde so vertuousslie affected, as that she maie wholly contemne this gaye attyre and womannishe hyauerie: for if thei once linke the felues in loue there with, (the nature thereof is suche) that thei will daiely seeke moze and moze to pzancke theim selues, and will keepe neither meane, nor order therein, but wantonly and licenciously without ende, couet the continuall maintenaunce of suche vaine and dissolute prodigallitie.

A Christian Woman therefore ought vterly to despise this outward deckyng, and woildie gallantise: but yet so, that if her Housebände will haue her so to dooe, or any other honeste respecte require the same, it is to bee boyne withall, and tolerated. Howbeit it is moste to bee wished, and thei are moste especially so to frame themselues in their attyre and deckyng, as sainte Peter here teacheth them: to witte, to bee inwardly garnished, and decked with a milde and gentle spirite. Thy hyauerie and furniture is gaye and gallant enough, if thou decke and attyre thy selfe, to content and please thy Housebände. Christe requirerth no suche thyng of thy handmaide, he is highly offended, if thou trimme thy selfe to the intent to please the eyes of other men, or because thou seekest thereby to bee dignified and called faire, lonely, or beautifull. But thy cheffest care ought to bee, to carie this precious furniture, and incomparable garnishment (afoze spoken of) in thy harte, farre from all corruption, as sainte Peter saith, and to leade a decent, honeste, and chaste life.

Vpon the first Epistle

It is a sure token, that thou haste very small workyng of the Spirite in thee, if thou seele thy self so bee muche giuen to this phantastical, worldly and outward bauerie. For if Faith and the Spirite were truly settled within thee, thou wouldest sooner stampe and treade it under thy feete, then to take delite and pleasure therein. And thou wouldest saie as Esther did: Esth. xiiij. Thou knowest Lorde that I hate and haue no delight in this Crowne whiche I weare on my head, and that I weare this gorgeous apparell euen againste my will. If I were not compelled so to doe, to please my Lorde the Kynge's eye, I had leiser tread it under my feete. A wife thus mynded, can not herein but bee muche the dearer and acceptabler to her housbande. And therefore Saincte Peter willet Spatrones and Wives to sett their delite in attieyng and garnishyng themselves with this inwarde furniture, and to bee endued with a meeke and quiet Spirite, haupyng their heartes boide and free from all corruption.

In aduising them to be meke and gentle spirited, his meanyng is not onely, to restraine them from licentious gabyngg abroade, and other open and outward misdemeanours of the world; but his meaning is, that thei should with muche more heed and carefulnesse looke to themselves, that their myndes inwardlie bee incorrupt, and that thei constantlie perseuere in a true and sincere Faith, not sufferyng the same any waie to be empyred or violated.

And thus it cometh to passe, that the hart willingly containeth it self within his limited boundes, without breakyng out into any disorder, and bethinketh how it maie please their housbande. And such an harte, is an exceedyng pleasure and acceptable attyre before God. If a woman bee neuer so richly appparelled in cloath or beaten golde, and garnished all over (euen to the foot) with Gemmes and precious Stones of price incalculable, this her apparell must needes bee very magnificent and sumptuous; but no woman can be any waie so richlie and brauely attired, as in any respect to be comparable to that inualuable attyre of the Soule, whiche before God is a thyng muche

much esteemed and set by. Golde and precious Stones in the eye of the world are things highly esteemed and of singular price, but before God, they be things filthie, abominable and of none account. That woman therefore is gorgeously and richly attired before God, which hath a quiet and gentle spirit: for seeing that before God it is a thing so highly set by, it can not but be a thing of singular great excellence and full of maiestie. A Christian soule already hath whatsoeuer Christ himself hath: because faith bringeth together with it all good things. And this is such a precious treasure and rich attire, that no man can sufficiently and according to the worthinesse thereof esteeme and prize it, for it is highly esteemed and prized by God himselfe. The perswasion and inculking of these reasons, will be muche behouefull, expedient and forcible to drawe womens myndes from the desire of this worldly pompous apparell, whereunto they are by nature otherwise muche enclined: and so to bring them in loue with this inwarde garment, that they make of themselves willingly loathe and detest all worldly and outward hautesse. For it can not be, that a vertuous Christian woman hearing these things, and inwardly in harte digesting them, but she straightwaies entrench into this consideration with her self: Beholde, if this haue at tyme and sumptuous apparell be nothing at all regarded before God, why should not I also contemne and despise it? But if I must needs weare it, I will haue it onely, to please my husbande thereby, whose pleasure it is to haue it so: and vnto whom, God himself hath expresselie commaunded me to be obedient. A woman thus minded, is truly garnished and decked in her spirit. Now, moreouer saint Peter bringeth in, the example of holie women, thereby to drawe and prouoke other women to this Christian purpose and consideration: saying,

- 5 For after this maner in tymes past, did the holy women, which trusted in God attyre themselves, and were subiect to their husbandes.
- 6 As Sara obeyed Abraham and called him, Lord:

Vpon the first Epistle



¶ **A**nd thei attyzed themselves, so is it meete that you also decke your selues (for so is his meaning) and to bee loyall and obedient to your houbandes, as Sara was vnto Abraham, who called him Lorde, as in the Scripture it appeareth Gen. xviij. When as the Angell came to Abraham and saied to Sara his wife: this tyme tweluemonth thou shalt beare a Sonne, she laughed and saied: After I am waxed olde, and my Lorde also, shall I giue my self to lust? Whiche place Saincte Peter here fitlie remembred and aptly alledged. For Sara would not haue called her houbande Lorde, if shee had not been subiect and obedient vnto hym, and carefully bent to please hym. Therefore he afterwarde saith.

6 Whose Daughters ye are, whiles ye dooe well, not beyng afraide of any terrour.



¶ **W**hat meaneth hee by this admonition? Doubtlesse this. The nature and disposition of women is for the most parte, tymorous and fearefull of euery wagging of a Strawe, and is easilie drawen to shake and tremble at euery shadow; which is the cause that there is in that Sexe suche stoare of magicall Impostures and superstitious enchantmentes, whiche thei also teache one an other, the number of whom now adayes is growen to bee very greate. This mischieuous practise ought to be farr awaie from euery Christian Patrone: who ought to dwell in suche safetie of conscience, and to liue so void of seruile feare, that she should not in suche fearefull sort runne vp and downe, now seeking helpe of this Enchauntresse, now of that. But rather so surely to stand vpon her garde, that she maie boldly and faithfullie commit all thinges to the good disposition of God: not doubting but that all thinges shall happen to her for the best, and that no harme can betyde her. For, beeyng assured and certaine of her estate, and that her condition is allowed and liked of GOD, what cause hath she to feare? After Childs dye, if shee her self
be

bee touched with any disease, all is for her good: let her referre the case to God, for sith she is in that state that is pleasing and acceptable to God, what can she wishe better? And let this be taken as spoken to the women: now followeth that which concerneth Men.

- 7 Likewise ye husbands, dwell with them as men of knowledge, giuyng honour vnto the woman as vnto the weaker vessel, euen as they whiche are heires together of the grace of life, that your prayers bee not interrupted.



THE Wife (saith hee) is a vessel and Instrument of God: which God bleth to this purpose that she should conceiue and bying for the Children, nourish and bying them vp, and gouerne the house. These be the offices and duties that belong to the Wife, who is a vessel and Organe of God, created and made for the same purpose: & whereunto he hath made her by a certain naturall propension, apt and enclimble. Such an Organe and meane, must a manne haue to helpe hym, and therefore saith S. Peter, you husbands ought to dwell with your wives as men of knowledge: And not that you should according to the brutish affections of your owne conceiptes and byaines seek to rule ouer them. Their duties are to frame themselves to fulfill their husbands commaundementes, and to seeke all waies to please them: But withall, it is the husbands charge again, to deale with his wife by reason, and to handle her gentle and curteouslie, as keepling something vnto her, and giuyng honour to her, as to the weaker vessel of God.

The Husband also is the Vessel and Organ of God, but the Woman is the weaker, and that not onely in bodie but also in minde, wherein she is of a weaker and fearfuller mould. And therefore thou must so handle her and so deale with her, as shee maie beare it. And herein thou must note other wise

S. iij,

frame

Vpon the first Epistle

Frame thy dealynges, then thou wouldest doe about any other Intrimentes whatsoever, that thou hast neede for any purpose to vse: as if thou wouldest perserue and keepe thy kniue in a good edge, thou must beware that thou cutt no stones with it. But of this poynt there can not any certaine rules be prescribed. God referreth that to the discretion and wisdom of eche peculier man, to vse his Wife with reason and knowledge: and as the nature, wit and disposition of euery one doth require. For thou arte not allowed to vse that power and authoritie whiche thou hast ouer her, accordyng to the deuile of thyne owne sensuall phantasie: for thou art her housbanne, because thou shouldest helpe her, keepe her, maintaine and nourish her, and not to spoyle and marre her. Hersin therefore (A saie) can no certaine scope and boundes be limited to a man for circumstance how to rule and gouerne his wife, but the vsage thereof is referred to euery particuler mans discrete dealyng and wise gouernement.

After this sorte wee are like wise taught, as touchyng the Housbandes, what dealynges are fitte and decent for them, and what behauiour they are to vse, agreeable to Gods good will and pleasure: To witte, that they shoulde dwell with their Wives, and ioyntlie with them seeke to gette bothe their liuynges, helpe to maintaine and comfort one the other, and to vse themselves the one to the other, gentle and courteously. And although all thynges in household matters, at all tymes be not handled accordyngly as thou wouldest haue them, but many tymes contrary to thy mynde and appointment, yet must thou remember that thou art a Man, and of more wit, reason, and perfection: then a Woman: And therefore the defects and misshappes, growyng through thy Wives weakenesse and imperfection, thou arte by reason to amends and beare with. And what any wafe wanteth in her, thou arte to supplie: Yes, sometymes thou muste winke at matters, and seeme not to knowe all thynges: sometymes to peece a little, many tymes to forgiue and pardon thynges amisse, and eche wafe to giue to thy wife her due honour.

This

This honour (I know not how) many haue after sundrie
 sortes interpreted. Some thinke it to bee meant, that a manne
 should prouide for his Wife conuenient foode and raimente,
 and so cherishe and keepe her: Some others would haue it to
 signifie the louelie beneuolence, that is and ought to bee be-
 tweene married folkes. In my opinion, the interpretation of
 this place, is thus muche in meanyng, that the Husbande
 should so account of his Wife, and so vse her, as a Christian
 bevell, and the organ or Instrumente of God. For thei ought
 bothe, so to frame and dispose their liues, that the Wife muste
 obeye, loue, and honour her Husbande: and againe, the Hous-
 bande is to giue vnto his Wife that honour, that is due vnto
 her. If thei can frame themselves after this sorte, thei should
 liue in moste amiable peace and loue together, and all thynges
 would goe well with them, whereas otherwise, if this know-
 ledge and mutuall zeale bee wantyng, all thynges in their ma-
 ried estate are lothsome, tedious, cumberesome, and full of grief.
 And hence commeth it, that suche couples (I meane suche
 Husbandes and suche Wiues) as marie together, for none
 other cause, but for wanton pleasure onely, thinkyng so still to
 liue in lasciuious delights, and sensuall appetites, finde no-
 thyng in their mariage, but irkesome grief, and verie torment
 of mynde. But if thei would haue regard, and respect vnto the
 Woorkes and will of God, and thither direct all their reasons
 and accomptes, thei should liue a right Christian life in their
 married estate, and farre otherwile then the Pagans and E-
 thnikes doe, who are utterly ignorant of the good will and pur-
 pose of God in this behalfe.

7 As thei which are Heires together of the grace of
 life.

THE Husbande ought not onely to marke and consi-
 der, that his Wife is a weake Creature, and easie to of-
 fende, and there to faile: But this rather is required of
 him, that he haue speciall regarde vnto this, that she is Bap-
 tized

Vpon the first Epistle

zed into the Faith of Christe, and that he is possessed of all those good thynges in Christe; whiche he hymself is inherita- ble unto. For accordyng to our inner man, wee are all equall and alike, and there is no difference betweene a Spanne and a Woman: But our wardlie, God requireth that the Span be the head and gouerne: and the Woman to be subiect and obedient.

7 That your prayers be not interrupted.



What meaneth Saint Peter by these wordes: For sooth euen this: that if wee will not directe our doyn- ges hereto, by this rule of reason, but deale sensually, roughly, selfwilledly, vnreasonably, vnquietly, and wayward- ly, and (as men that will neuer bee pleased) looke to haue eue- rie thyng to fall out sumpe, accordyng to our owne willfull de- uise: Wee maie not thinke but that the Wile also, hath her dis- seases and imperfections, and so shall the one neuer please nor content the other, nor greatly care the one for the other: the one neuer yeelds anye to the other, neuer pardon and forget any thyng the one to the other: Nor the one to like well of that, which is doen by the other, or of the one to thother: and in these outrageous garboiles, how can they praise, and saie: Forgiue vs our trespasses, as wee forgiue them that trespass against vs. By this prayer, we must fight against the Deuill, and there- fore it behooueth vs to agree among our selues. These are those true and moste excellent good Woordes, that herein wee are required to enshue and put in practice. Which if they were thoughtlie inculked, and preached vnto vs, and that wee effec- tuallie and entirely would agnize and remember them, wee should haue all thynges at home in moste quiet case, and peace- able tranquillitie. Hitherto now wee haue heard how a Chri- stian man ought to vse, and behaue hymself in sundrie vocati- ons and kindes of life: and primallie also one with an other. Now, he will teache vs, how all manner of men generallie are to behaue theminselues Christiantlie one to an other, and what comely comertation outwardlie they are to vse.

8 Finallie,

8 Finally, be ye all of one mynde: one suffer with an other: loue as brethren: bee pitifull: bee courteous:



All that he here saith, carieth none other meaning; but that wee should loue one another. For that whiche the Scripture elsewhere comprehendeth in fewe wordes, is here somewhat at large paraphrazed and expounded. The meaning therefore of sainct Peter here is, as though he should saie: This is the summe of all that can be commaunded and prescribed, concerning your outward conuersation, that you bee all endued with one mynde, affected alike, and linked in harte and iudgemente alike, that whatsoeuer seemeth right and good to one, maie seemably bee so thought and deemed of others.

Wee can not all of vs doe one and the self same Woorkes: every one must worke for hymself, and in that vocation wherein it hath pleased God to place him. The Housholders charge, is not as the Clurkes, nor the Seruauntes office as the Hostlers, and so of others. It is tooo foolish and ridiculous, that some of our maisterlie leaders haue taught, how that we must all doe the same thynges, and worke the same Woorkes. Of this stampe are those dreaming Dopelinges, that are still beating into our heades, their lying Legendes of Sainctes, preaching thereout unto vs, that this holie Saincte did this, and that holie Saincte did that: inferring therevpon, that wee also must doe the same. Doubtlesse, Abraham when he would haue Sacrificed his soome Isaac, being so peculiarie commaunded to doe by God, did therein a moste excellent and worthe act: but when the Gentiles and other Nations would imitate his dealing therein, without any expresse commaundement of God, and sacrifice their children: that dealing of theirs was abhominable before God. So did Salomon moste goodlie and well, in building a Temple unto the Lord; for the whiche God moste liberallie recompensed hym: now therupon for aint. He starteth vp our blinde foolthe and prating Buzzards, who teach vs that wee also must builde Churches and Chapells,

C. j.

whereas

Vpon the first Epistle

whereas in trueth, there is no such thing commaunded vnto vs of God. And herevpon it cometh to passe, that whereas wee ought among our selues to haue all one mynde, and one iudgement, but diuerse woorkes, the case is turned cleane vpside downe: and wee all seeke to doe one self same woork, and so haue disagreeing iudgements, and contrary mindes: which is hartie repugnant to the Gospell.

All men are now therfore to be taught, that it is required at all our handes, that wee should thinke all one thing, bee all of one iudgement and like affection, but yet that wee must woork diuerse: that wee haue one harte, but yet many handes. Wee must not all followe one and the same woork, but euery one must exercise his owne woork: For other wise wee could not perseuere and continue, in one mynde and one harte. That whiche is out ward, must needs bee diuerse: so that euery one must abide in that, whiche he is commaunded vnto, and wherunto he is called. This is a true & sound doctrine for this life, and needfull of all men to bee thoughtlie knowne, and effectually practized: for the Deuill is moste busie in this point, yea, and hath already in many brought his purpose to passe, that fewe men continue in the function peculiarly incumbent vnto thein, but blindlie runne on, and seeke to discharge their owne peculiar offices by the woorkes of others: wherevpon there hath growen among vs muche iarring disagreement: Honkes snappng at Priestes, and Priestes kickng at Honkes, and euery seuerall Profession of life, spightng another. For euery one would haue his owne Profession and trade, to bee accompted beste, and therewithon hath growen vp such a rabble of sondrie professed Religions, one seeking to be had in estimation before another. Thus the Augustine Friars sought to outcountenance, and deface the Preachng Friars: and the Carthusians still grunted against the Hermits: So that thei are all growen to bee seuerall and distinct Sectes, and in no Profession or trade of life hath there bene lesse agreement; then among these holie religious Orders, for so (saung your reuerence), thei must bee termed.

But

But if one should preache vnto theim, that no Woork be
foze GOD excelleth other, but that all thynges by faiche are
made equall, that our hartes should continue vniforme, and
that wee all should be alike mynded: or if one should saie: This
Order of Profession wherein the Bishop liueth, is before God
of no more acceptation, then the order of life wherein the poore
Laiema liueth: or that the kinde of life that a Nunne hath pro-
fessed, is no better then the state of a married woman, and so of
the residue: I am sure, thei can not abide to heare it: for euery
one strueth to bee accounted of greater excellencie then o-
ther. What? (will thei saie) how can it bee, but that this stricke
and austere trade of life, whiche wee haue vowed and profes-
sed, must needs bee muche better and excellenter, then the
plaine profession of the Laikes?

Therefore to bee of one mynde and of one iudgement, sig-
nifieth that euery one should so thinke of his owne worke and
profession, as of an other mans: so that he account and thinke
the married state to bee as good, as the vowed state of chastitie
and virgintrie: and that all thinges are equal before God, who
iudgeth accordyng to the hearte and faiche, and not accordyng
to the persones or outwarde workes. And therefore we ought
so to iudge as God himself iudgeth, that is, that we must haue
all one mynde and one iudgement, that vnitie and concord
maie flourish and remaine in the worlde: that our hartes may
continue undisseuered, and not bee drawen asunder for these
outwarde bymatters: so that we are to deeme allow and thinke
well of the worke that any other doeth, so long as the same is
not of it self, Sinne.

Of this Concord speakech saint Paule i. Cor. xj. where
hee saith thus: I feare, least as the Serpent beguiled Eue
through his subtiltie, so your myndes should bee corrupt fro
the simplicitie that is in Christ; whiche is as muche to saie, as,
I feare least the Deuill likewise deceiue you, and drawe your
simple hartes and agreeing myndes into diuision and discord.
Likewise Phil. iij. The peace of God whiche passeth all vn-
derstandyng, preserue your hartes and myndes in Christ Ie-

Vpon the first Epistle

lus. And why is the Apostle so carefull for our hartes and mindes? Truly because therevpon al other thinges doe depende.

For if I once fall into a reprobate sense, and bee possessed with a peruerse vnderstandpng, I make a general shipwreck of all together. As if I bee a Honke, and therein fullie perswade my self, that my woorkes are more regarded and esteemed before God, then other mens: and should saie: I thanke thee O GOD, that I am become a Honke: my profession is farre better then the vulgare state of married life: therevpon straightwaies necessarie ariseth a swelling arrogancie of the minde: and a vaine puffing vp of the hart can not but be there, where I seeme in myne owne eyes to bee more iust and righteous then others be, and in respect of my self contennie other men. By whiche meanes I wilfullie beguile my self: for there is no married woman liuing in the true and sincere faith of Christ, but is muche more esteemed before God, then I with my lowlie profession and witlelle floue. Therefore when we acknowledge & assuredly knowe that faith bringeth with it all thinges that be expedient and needfull for a Christian man to haue, then are wee all of one mynde, heart and iudgement, without makpng any difference of woorkes, or preferring one before an other.

Thinke therefore that this place of S. Peter is not to be vnderstoode of any externall mynde, but of a spirituall and internall iudgement in thinges, and suche as before GOD are highly set by: that life and doctrine maie vniformallie agree together, and that the same thing that seemeth good to an other, maie seeme also good to vs, and also that that maie bee likyng and pleasant to an other, that is liked and pleasant vnto vs, as afoze hath been declared. This hearte and this mynde haue thei that be right Christians, and this ought thei with all care and diligence to looke vnto, that by no meanes it quaille accordpng to saint Pauls exhortation. For as soone as the Deuill by his malice ouerthroweth this hart and this minde: straightwaies is the bonde of true vnitie broken asunder, and all thinges at once come to an bitter confusion.

8 One suffer with an other.

ET one haue a care for an other: lett the necessitie of thy Neighbour no lesse moue thy hearte, then if the case were thine owne: yea thinke it to appertaine vnto thee: And when hee hath sustained any hindrance, losse or mischaunce, doe not thou reioyce therat, neither thus thinke with thy selfe: It is well enough: if some worse thing had happened vnto him, he hath well deserued it. For where charitie is, there is so muche and so greate care for the state of our Neighbour, that if any mishap befall vnto hym, it should no lesse pearce our heartes, then if it had chaunced vnto our selues.

8 Loue as Brethren.

Et every one accompte an other as his owne Brother: the whiche how to bee vnderstood, is very easie, for euen Nature her self teacheth vs. Wee see that they whiche bee naturall bozne brethren, liue in a more neerer bande of loue, and are more carefull, zealous, willing and ready one to assist an other, then any other freends be. The same must wee now dooe, beeyng all Brethren together by Baptisme, insomuche that our verie Parentes after our baptisme, are to vs in the place and steede of Brethren, for that wee haue the same giftes, graces and benefites at Christes hande by Faith, whiche they haue.

8 Be pitifull one to an other.

The Greekes in this one word (ὁμαλῶς) comprehend all this sentence: whiche to expresse againe in one worde in Latine, wee must bee diuised to call it Viscerous. And I knowe not how better to interpret and expaine it, then by a comparison or similitude. Behold & marke how a Father or Mother is affected towards their Child: that

Vpon the first Epistle

that if a mother see her Infant to suffer any extremity of waite,
her harte and bowelles come within her. And thence is this
for the or phaze of speaking bargained, which is very vsuall
and often in the Scriptures, One Historie thereof we haue in
the first Booke of Kynges Cap. iij. Where it is declared, how
two women contended before King Solomon, for a young
Infant, whose it should be, for either of them saied claime vnto
it. The King therefore purposing to trie out, whether of
them was the right mother of the Childe, could deuise no bet-
ter waie to bolt out the truth, then by nature it self: by whiche
pollicie he tryed out the matter. For hee saied to the women:
Thou saiest that the liuyng Childe is thine, and she saith, it
is hers: Bryng mee therefore hither a Sworde, and diuide the
Infant in twaine, and giue the one halfe to the one, and the
other halfe to the other. By whiche wise pollicie, hee founde
out which was the true mother of the Childe. For the Scrip-
ture in the self same place recordeth, that straightwaies the
bowelles of her compassion were moued in loue toward her
Childe: and that she cried out and saied: Oh my Lord, not so,
but see her rather haue the whole Childe, and slay hym not.
Wherevpon the King presentlie gaue iudgment, & saied, This
is the true mother of the Childe, deliuer him vnto her. Here-
hence maie wee gather the very true sense of this worde, here
deliuered vnto vs by saincte Peter, to signifie an enter com-
passion and most hartie affection, And that we should be none
other wise mutually affected one toward another, then they
that are naturall Brethren by blood: that euery ones whole
harte, marowe, veines and all the powers of our mynde and
bodie be totallie moued with compassion at the mishappes of
an other: and that we ought to beare suche a zealous, mutuall,
hartie and motherly affection one toward another, that if any
thing with the miscarie, it should euen pearce vs (as it were)
to the death. Suche a mynde ought one Christian to beare to-
wardes an other. But I feare, there are but a very fewe to be
founde, whiche so enterly with their harte loue their Neigh-
bour, and that are so moued with compassion ouer the neces-
sities

lies and wants of others, as a mother is ouer her Babe that she boze in her wombe.

8 Be curteous.



Vour conuersation be gently and amiable one towarde an other in these outwarde thinges of the world, that every one not onely account the thynges whiche happen to an other, to appertaine also to hymself: euen as parentes are wont to doe, who make no lesse reckoning of that whiche is their Childrens then of their owne; but also that every one vse louing and curteous conuersation with his Neighbour. For there bee some so warwarde, churlishe, crabbed and vnrasonable, that every one almost is vntwilling to haue any dealyng or vse any companie or conference with them. And so it cometh to passe that suche persones commonly be suspicious and easlie drawn vnto wrath and anger, so that none will willingly deale with them. But thei be truly curteous, frendly, fauourable, sincere and amiable, whiche construe all thynges to the best, bee of nature nothing suspicious, and are not easlie mooued vnto anger and wrath, but can take well in wyse whatsoeuer is doen vnto them.

Beholde now and looke into the Gospell, and there shall you finde Chyriste depainted and sett out after this maner, in whom wee may beholde and see moste evidently all these vertues singularly abiding. The Pharisees tempted hym after sundry sortes, now one waye and now an other, to entrapp and catche hym at aquantage, and yet is not see a whit therewith mooued. And although his Apostles now and then stumbled and did amisse & foolishly, yet neuer did he roughly and hardly checke them, but vsed alwaies a mild and curteous lenitie towardes them, assuring and drawing them vnto hym, to the ende to make them the gladder and willinger with all their hartes to liue with him, and to haue a greate pleasure in obeying

Vpon the first Epistle

spring and cleauing vnto his companie.

The same kinde of louyng affection wee commonly see to bee among tried freendes and faithfull Companions, where there bee two or three that bee sincerely affected in mynde one towards an other: If one of them make a fault, the other taketh it well in mouth, and gentlie beareth with it.

This example some what confirmeth this sentence and aduertisement of Saincte Peter, but not whollie expresseth the full meanyng thereof. For the freendlinesse and courtesie that is here spoken of, ought indifferently to bee extended and shewed vnto all men.

Here thou seest the verie nature of sincere and true Loue, and what a perfecte, gracious and fauourable people, Christians are. The Angelles leade this manner of life among theim selues in heauen: Whiche kinde of life wee ought also to practise, and leade here on earth: but the number among whom the same is to bee founde, is verie rare and scante. As saint Peter therefore hath taught Housebandes, and Wliues, Wensleruantes, and Womenseruantes, so to frame and leade their liues, as that eche one should looke to his owne charge and function, and carefullie applie his owne pecullier vocation: So willecth he likewise the same practise and order, to bee putte in use in our common deallpuges among our selues.

Now, the onely Woorkes, wherevnto Sainct Peter here would haue vs earnestlie and zealouslie to giue our selues, are these: to bee sozie at the harmes and mischaunces of our Brethren, to bee seruient in Brotherlie Loue, to haue our verie bowelles thoroughlie enflamed with the loue of the, and to thewe our selues readie, willing, tractable, and fit to loue, and to bee loued of all men.

Here is neuer a woorde mentioned of any of those flimsy toyes, and frivolis deuises that haue heretofore verie deuoutlie been preached, or rather prated on vnto vs. He doeth not here saie, Builde an Abbeie or a Nummerie, giue some maintenance for an ordinarie Masse, take the holie order of Bachel hood vpon thee, profess thy self a Monk, weare a Cowle,

Colosse, holie Chastities, any such like. But he saith thou
 Looksthat thou bee milde, gentle, and courteous. These are
 the true good Aliquies in neede, yea, rather the golden De-
 des, the Pearles and the precious Stones, wherewith God
 is singularly delighted. But no this doctrine is a perfecte Christian, and right
 wholesome doctrine. Who can not the Deuill any more abide it.
 For this doctrine once prevailing, would quickly overthrowe
 and subuerse his Kingdomme: And therefore he seeketh all the
 waies that he can to defeat, and destroye it. he stirreth up
 these poysonous Idoles, and multiplyinge Donkes, to sell and
 haile, to haire and curse, and malapertly to affirme, that who-
 soever he be, that speaketh against any of their dogmes, spea-
 keth by the verye witness, suggestion and procurement of the
 Deuill himselfe. But firste knowe thou, the use of this word
 full and necessarie good. Wherof, the real saincte Peter here
 speaketh: I haue se, brotherly love, becominge entirelye vnto the
 howells of our felicitie in this world, and eternall. And with all
 frendlyesse, equallitee, and deuerenstie. If on which hee saith,
 (as we neede) that must saye to them to be) then are theye com-
 to him, and to be accounted as impudent liars, in blas-
 phemyng and affirming their stony dogges and deuises, so hee
 mooste worthy to be preferred. It is to be wondered at, how
 suche grosse and palpable blunders the soule floure into men-
 nesses. Thomas Aquinas out of their wyllesseye ascende couled
 Rabines, impudentlye dogged, that the Dogges of Dopes
 and Donkes, farre surmounted the common flasse of the sim-
 ple Lattie. Whiche mooste impious, shamelesse, and lying af-
 fectations, there afterwarde by the Schoollmen restituted and al-
 clowed, and thei ouerly that were the Professors thereof, sur-
 rected with the title, dignitie, and name of right Maisters, Doc-
 tors, and afterwarde the Pope with the Ruffianlike name of his
 carnall Cardinales and othermes, Canonized and Decla-
 red them for holie Sainctes.

Abandonnyng therefore, and reiectyng all other doctrines,
 we wishe that to embrace, and firmlye to stick vnto this, Christ
 himselfe

himself and his Apostles haue taught so, If thou wilt ther-
fore doe those things that of all others are best, and take
that protection upon thee, that of all others is most holie, em-
brace Faith and Charity: and detest that grosse impudencie
of these Popelinges, which affirme and vaunte their profes-
sion to surpasser either Faith or Charity. For if their vo-
wes and professions were of such worthineesse, that they ex-
ceeded Faith, it must also exceed the word of God: And if it exceed
the word of God, it must needs followe, that it erreth and
passeth God himself. And here we see, that S. Paule y^e Thelij.
more verie truly in saying, that Antichrist should be called blas-
phemous, that is called God, finally, leaue this to charge
of these matters, whereof we see, S. Paule, and Courtiers
are writing, there doubtlessly other things be damnable.
We see therefore how plainly and fully S. Peter hath
here sette downe vnto vs, how we ought to frame our selues
to live in Christianitie, when in our outward conuersation: ha-
ving alwayes in our excellence and skill declared, how our
lives should be framed to Godward. Therefore this
Epistle is thus fraught with Order of much goodlie and whole-
some doctrine, and therefore to be accounted as golden, and
among the best, and more auantageous Epistles that are.

And thus we see, that the Apostle hath here sette
downe vnto vs, how we ought to frame our selues
to live in Christianitie, when in our outward conuersation:
having alwayes in our excellence and skill declared, how our
lives should be framed to Godward. Therefore this
Epistle is thus fraught with Order of much goodlie and whole-
some doctrine, and therefore to be accounted as golden, and
among the best, and more auantageous Epistles that are.



Et he continueth his exposition of L. one more
in large, instructing vs further how we should
behauour our selues toward the malicious and
persecute vs. The meaning of the Apostle is
this, when they persecute you, do not resist and
hurte you, doe not you the like againe vnto them, but for the
sake that they doe vnto you, requite ye good vnto them againe.
When they will smite you, take heed that ye doe not
the

the like vnto the, but contrariwise blesse them, praye for them, and wishe well vnto them. And this is a moſte excellent point and office of Loue: But O Lorde, how fewe is the number of ſuche Chriſtians? But why muſt wee not render euill for euill, but contrariwiſe good for euill? Doubtleſſe (ſaith he) becauſe ye are herevnto called, that ye ſhould bee hoires of bleſſing. Which ought hoſte to admoniſhe and to inuite, and allure you herevnto.

In the Scripture, we Chriſtians are called a bleſſed people, bleſſed euen by God himſelf. For God ſaith vnto Abraham Gene. xij. In thy See de ſhall all Nations of the Earth be bleſſed. Seruyng therefore that God hath ſo bountifully poured this bleſſing vpon vs, that he might take a waie from vs all the curſe and malediction, which we had drawen from our firſt Parents, & which Moſes denounced vnto all thoſe that did not beleue, it is verie meete and requiſite, that wee heeryng thus graciouſly bleſſed, ſhould ſo vſe and behaue our ſelues in eche reſpecte, as that this may be ſaied and veriſed on vs: behold, this is a bleſſed people. And therefore ſaime Doctors meaning heretu is, as though he ſhould haue ſaied: Conſider with your ſelues and behold, GOD hath inuſed and beſtowed this his gracious fauour vpon you, to take a waie all curſe and malediction from you, and hath not imputed nor laied to your charge the blaſphemie, wherevnto ye haue diſhonoured him, neither hath he for the ſame puniſhed you, as ye haue well deſerued: but contrariwiſe hath moſte liberally and frankly beſtowed the richelle of his grace and benediction vpon you: who in reſpecte of your continuall blaſphemie, were worthe of al manner of malediction and curſe: for where ſtandſt ſaiche wanteth, there can the harte none other wiſe doe, but ſtill curſe and blaſpheme God. Now therefore endeavour your ſelues, ſo to deale with others, as it hath been dealt with you. Curſe not, reuile not, but doe good and ſpeake well, yea, although others rail on you, and ſpeake all manner of euill againſt you, and patiently ſuffer when iniurie and wrong is offered vnto you. And now he bynndeth a place out of the xxiiij. Pſalme, where the

Vpon the first Epistle

Prophet Dauid saith thus;

- IO For if any man long after life, and to see good dayes, let hym refraine his tongue from euill, and his hippes that thei speake no guile.



That would entoye a pleasant and delightful life, and not dye the, Death but see good dayes, that all thynges maie prosper and goe well with hym, lette hym refraine his tongue from speaking euill, and that not onely against his frendes, whiche is a moste vntowardlie, and reuoluing the nature of vnto Serpentes and Cypers but his meaning is thus muche more: let hym carie aboute with hym an honest and good meaning innde, let hym refraine his tongue from speaking any harme euen against his Enemies, yea, when hee is thereto prouoked, and hath greate cause ministered vnto hym, to reuile and speake amysse. Yea, lette hym refraine his hippes also (saith he) that thei utter no guile. For there be not a few, whiche outwardly in mouthe speake well, and shewe their neighbour friendly Goodnowowe, whiche inwardly in harte thinke rancardly and highlytully: euen wishyng them at the Deuill. These men are they that haue no right nor interest in the inheritaunce of blessing. Thei be euill frutes of an euill Tree. And thus dooeth Sancte Peter truly refferre the place whiche he alledged concerning Woordes, vnto the roote inwardly, namely vnto the Harte. And this is the verie true and proper interpretation herof. There followeth also after ward in the aforesayd place of the Psalmist these woordes.

- II Let hym eschue euill and doe good. let hym seeke peace, and followe after it.



He woulde thinketh the beste waie to purchase this peace, is to requite wrong with wrong, and one displeasure with an other. But this is not the right waie

to attaine vnto it. For there was neuer yet any King, that by this meanes could winne peace at his Enemies handes. The Romaine Empire grew to such might and Power, that it subdued and ouerthrew all that againstoode it: and yet could it neuer retain the people that were Subiecte vnto them, in their due obedience. And therefore this course and order of repressing our Enemies with force, is not the beste waie to purchasse and confirme steadfast peace among vs. For if we overcome and suppress one Enemy, there will arise by tenne, yea twentie, till we our selues bee brought to confusion.

But hee taketh the right and orderly waie to seeke after peace, and shall surely finde it, whiche restraineth his tongue, either with euill, and reuerceth good for il. This is another manner of waie then the Apostle saith of bairn shaltes. Now, to decline from euill and to doe good, signifieth to refrain either from hearpng or speakng any wordes of spight and malice, and not to seeke requitall of iniuries. Seeke after peace this waie, and thou shalt bee sure to finde it. For when thine enemy hath serued his owne mynde and fullie satisfied his angrie humour in saying what he can against thee: if thou againe replye not against hym with bitter and deepng wordes, neither stoyme and fret at his iniuries, thou shalt overthrowe hym in his owne turne, and get the vpperhande of hym in the swaie of his owne maliciousnesse. For in this sort did Christ overcome his Enemies vpon the Crosse, and not with any sword or materiall weapon: Requittall of one iniurie with an other, and one spewe euene with an other encreaseth furie and setteth parties at further iarre then they were afore: wheras patience and suffaunce procureth quietnesse and ease. But some will say: how can this be? it standeth not with manhood, neither can flesh and bloud abide so to dole. I confesse, it is more then is simple in man thus to dooe, but doeing assisted with supernall grace, and thus patiently tolerating iniuries without desire of actuall reuenge, thou shalt be sure to speede as this next sentence purporteth: so wilt,

and the eyes of the wicked are closed: the righteous
and his ears are open unto their prayers: and the
face of the Lord is against them that do euill.



If thou thy self seeke not private reuenge, nei-
ther recompence euill for euill, there stretch out
thine hand vnto the Heauens, O Lord, who can not
hide to see his Seruantes take wrong: and
therefore they haue the best and the iustest cause
whiche strike not againe, neither seeke reuenge. God hymself
careth and respecteth the, and their prayers sound in his eares.
He is our protectour, ayded and assisted: he is our Di-
uine and our seer, he will not be vnmindfull of vs, neither an-
swere sliue out of his sight, for his eyes are alwaies vpon vs.
And this is it that ought to euey and stirre by our courages,
and to perswade and moue euery Christian patiently to
suffer all manner of iniurie without requiring one euill with an-
other. For if I consider the matter with my self aright, I must
thus thinke, that the Soule of that man whiche hurteth me
(without earnest repentance) shalbe in endlesse tormentes for
best and therevpon a Christian harte can not choose but thus
burst out in hartie and zealous prayer vnto God and fairemost
loving and gracious Father, forsomuche as this man hath so
horrible incurred thy displeasure; and so miserably thereby
thy owne himself into the danger of Hell fire: I humbly praye
and beseeche thee that thou wouldest pardon and forgive him
this his fault: and so doe to him as thou hast done vnto me, in
deliuering me from this thy heauie wrath and anger. For as he
hath his eyes euer ready bent and with fauour most gra-
uouse beholding them that be good: so looketh he with a sterne
and frowning countenance vpon them that doe euill. Wee
therefore whiche haue wronged thee, O Lord, graue-
ly looketh vpon thee with a heauie and angry countenance, and with
indignation ought so pittie their wooll ease and to be thought-
ly sope for their miserable estates, and boldly to praye for the

13 And who is it that will harme you; if ye followe that whiche is good?

When we followe that whiche is good, and recompence not euill for euill, but rather most curiously and with the very bowelles of remembrance affliction embrace and love all menne: there is none that can doo vs any harme. For although they should take from vs our wealth, our name and home, yet are not we in any point harmed, because we possesse such abundant store of good things into which, the things taken from vs, can by no means and in no respect bee compensated. They that persecute and seeke after vs to doo vs harme, haue no goodes at all, sayng onely these same, momentanie, vniuersall and transitorie trash of the worlde, and shall afterward if they continue in impietie, bee cast into Hell fier, there for euer to bee tormented. But our goodes are eternall and incorruptible, although we suffer a little losse of these worldly and temporall goodes.

14 Notwithstanding, blessed are ye, if ye suffer for righteousness sake.

Not onely saith that no man shall be able any way to harme you, if ye suffer any thing for Gods sake; but he further addeth Blessed are ye for the same: so that ye haue greater cause of reioysing, if ye be afflicted. For so saith Christ Math. 5. Blessed are ye, when men reuile you and persecute you and say all manner of euill against you for my sake, saying, Reioyce and bee gladd. For that rightlie and thoughtlie weigheth these wordes, and considereth that the Lord hymself speaketh them, and that so lovingly and so comfortably, how should he but constantly stande to him teaching, and patiently abide all that can or may happen. Againe, they that in these wordes feele no comfort and inward consolation, can not but bee

Vpon the first Epistle

bee bold and better p without all strength, hope and comfort.

14 Yea, feare not their feare, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctifie the Lorde God in your hartes:

Whis place againe hath sainte Peter taken out of the Prophete Esay, where he hath these wordes: Feare ye not their feare; neither bee ye affraid of them: but sanctifie God in your hartes, and let hym bee your feare, and let hym bee your dread. Esay. viij. Here we haue a very greate protection and refuge, so that we maye boldly repose our selues in saluacion, and be assured that we shall haue no more the worlde's craft, and rage, threaten and menace neist for payntment: yea, shall their terror come to an ende; whereas our toye and consolation shall be endlesse. And therefore we ought not to feare the worlde any thing at all, but rather to be valiauntlie men, and constantlye endure aged againste it: but before God to humble our selues and to feare with all reuerence.

And what meaneth sainte Peter, in bidding vs to sanctifie the Lord God? How can we sanctifie hym, of whom we must be sanctified? I answer, that wee after this sort, praye, Hallowed (or sanctified) bee thy name: for that it is our dutie to sanctifie his name: whereas (notwithstandyng) he hym selfe sanctifieth his owne name. Therefore, sainte Peter is thus to bee vnder stood: Sanctifie the Lorde God in your hartes, that is, whatsoeuer it shall please God to laie vpon vs, whether it be to vs good or badde, pleasaunt or greuous, honorable or ignominious, luckie or unluckie, tis our partes and dutie, not onely to embrace and take the same in good payregard, thinges sent to vs for furtherance and benedictie, but also to accompt the same as holie, and thereupon to say: This that I now receiue from the Lordes hande, is a thing so precious and holie, that I am not worthy to be partaker thereof. So saith the Prophete Dauid Psal. Cxlv. The Lord is iust in all his waies, and holie in all his workes. When as

Therefore in these things doe thus glorifie God, and repute
 his workes as precious and holie. I doe thereby sanctifie hym
 in my hart: But those fellows that dwell so muche upon the
 holines of the Lawe, that they thinke not God to bee righte-
 ous, but that he doeth them wrong: and that he is asleepe and
 neither will maintaine his owne iustice and righteousness, nor
 yet repulse wrong and iniurie doen vnto hym; these fellows
 (I saie) dishonour God, in thus deemyng him to bee neither
 iust nor holie. But hee that is a true Christian, must entierlie
 ascribe all iustice vnto God, and vnto himselfe (as truche it is)
 all iniustice: so acknowledge God euer holie, and himselfe pro-
 phane; and sincerely to professe and confesse that God is in all
 his doings most iust and holie. This hartie acknowledgme-
 nt he requireth at the handes of every one of vs. And forea-
 d we Danl. ix. O Lorde God, iuste and true are thy Iudgements;
 which thou hast doen vnto vs: for we haue sinned and com-
 mitted iniquitie; and haue doen wickedlie, yea we haue re-
 belled, and haue departed from thy preceptes and from thy
 iudgements: and therefore vnto thee O Lorde belongeth
 Righteousnesse, honour and glorie, but vnto vs open shame
 and confusion. To conclude, when any calamitie or mishap-
 pe (as it is commonlie taken) betydeth vs, let vs hartlie thanke
 God and blesse his holie name for it, and that is it which sainct
 Peter and Clay doe here cal, the right sanctifying of the Lord
 our God.

Notwithstanding, it is not hereby required at our handes,
 to saie, that he whiche hath harmed vs, hath doen therein well
 and iustly. For the Iudgment that is betwene God and thee,
 is of a farre other sort, then the iudgment betwene thee and
 me. I maye foster and nourish in my hart hatred, enuie, and
 dissolutes desires, wherein I nothinge do all kinder or
 harme thee: as thou likewise hurtest not mee in that which
 thou doest: but yet before God I am vnjust and haue deserued
 sharpe punishment: and therefore if he punish me for the same,
 he dealeth iustly with me and doeth me no wrong, for I haue
 deserued it. If he doe not punish me but pardon my trespasses

offence, yet be worth therein in little, for alwaies and in all things
 god Justice and righteousness is to bee ascribed unto hym: al-
 beit hereupon it followeth not, but that he doth briefly which
 persecuteth mee. For although I haue grievouslie sinned and
 am guiltye of hainous offences before the Patience of God, yet
 haue I not thereby wronged hym, that without cause persecu-
 teth mee. Therefore when God giueth leaue to the Deuill and
 euill persones to haue power to worke any harme vnto thee,
 and to afflict thee, hauing doon no harme vnto them: knowe
 this, that God vseth them as Executioners of his Justice: that
 thou maist thereby learne, that godlesse persons and wrong-
 full practises, are to the godlie, things as bothe good, expedient
 and profitable.

For to reade we, Ezech. xix. of King Nebuchadnezzar,
 where the Lorde by his Prophete saith: Doeest thou not
 knowe that he is my seruante, and serued a greate service
 for me. And then he further saith: Behold, I will giue hym a
 reward: for I haue not as yet recompensed hym, for the la-
 bour and seruite that he did for me. I will giue vnto hym,
 the lande of Egypt for his labour, and it shall bee the wages
 for his Armie, for he serued against it, and thei wrought for
 me, saith the Lorde God. This King had neither right, nor
 auctoritie ouer the Egyptians, but GOD had bothe: And
 therefore it pleased hym, by this King and his Armie, as by
 his instrumentes, to take punishment on them. And in this
 sort also are euill and gracelesse persones the Seruantes of
 GOD, and serue hym: because thei shoulde not bee fedde at his
 hande francklie and frellie, without dōing some what for their
 liuing. For God commonlie francketh and pamperech them
 full of these Temporal pleasures, and worldly delights: in
 thei wherof he vseth their ministerie and seruice, to worke
 his will, and that thei shoulde butcherlie persecute his Saints.
 Whiche purpose of God, because these bloudie Molues
 by their fleshlie reason, can not looke into thei thereby nozle
 themselves in this errour, that thei thinke themselves to deale
 therein verie well and godlie. Whereas in deed thei are in
 this

this present world, easily rewarded with wealth, prosperitie,
Honour, Dignities, Reuenges, Iuridictions and Seignio-
ries: and that for none other cause, but for that thei bee Gods
Hangmen and Executioners, to persecute the goodlie Christi-
ans. And therefore if thou patientlie suffer, and sincerely con-
tinue in thy desires, perceiving vnto hym thanks for all things,
whosoever it pleaseh him to send vnto thee, there is no doubt
but all goeth well with thee, for he will neuer faile them that
vnto feinedlie truste in hym, but will a suretie chaine and caste
thy persecutors (excepte thei earnestlie repent) into hell fire,
there to bee perpetually tormented, even for the wronges that
thei haue doon vnto thee. whereas thou he will mercifullie re-
ceiue into embrace blisse and felicitie. And therefore be conten-
ted so let hym iudge and requite: for of hym shall euery one re-
ceiue, according to his desertes.

An example heretofore we haue in the holie man Iob. After that all his goodes were consumed, his Cattail taken a waie, his Children slaine, and al that he had, waisted, brake out into no worse woe then these: The Lorde hath giuen, and the Lorde hath taken awaie againe, euen as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it come to passe, blessed be the name of the Lord. Iob. i. And when as his wife came to hym, mocking and shewing hym, saying: When shall thou? What shalt thou by this thy rightnesse? Blasphe me God and dye. And he said vnto her: Thou hast spoken like a foolish woman, what shall wee receiue good at the hands of God, and not receiue euill? Wherefore euen as it hath pleased him, so is it come to passe, as the Lorde hath giuen, (saith he) so hath he taken awaie againe: It was not God that gaue, and the Deuill that tooke awaie, but yet the Deuill was the meane. In Iob. xii. whereby all this was done: but he did it none other wise then as a minister of Churment appointed thereto by GOD. This man rightlly sacrificed God: wherfor God also highly commended hym and wonderfulli encreased and dignified hym.

Vpon the first Epistle

¶ And bee readie alwaies to giue an answer to e-
uery man that asketh you a reason of the hope that
is in you, and that with meekenesse & feuerence,



WE must needs confesse, that saint Peter
writeth these wordes vnto all Christians in
general, aswell to Popes and Popes Cler-
gie as to the Laitie, to Women aswell as to
Men, to yong aswell as to old, of what state,
sex or condition so euer they bee: willing e-
uery one that professeth Christianitie, without any exception,
to hold fast the sure ground worke of their Faith: whereby they
maie at all tymes bee able to geue a reason of the same, and to
answer for it, when and wheresoeuer occasion requireth.
The Laitie hitherto hath been debarr'd and inhibited the
reading of the Scriptures: in whiche practise the Deuill use
a meruailous subtle deuise, to terrifie, abashe, waine, and e-
strange men from the Scriptures: wherein (the more to bee
lamented) he preuailed and attained to the verie ende and
pitch of his firste conceiued vyce. For thus thought he
with hymself: If I maie once bypne to passe, that the Laitie
may not read the Scriptures, I doubt not but within a while,
I shall vyue the Popes themselves from the Scriptures al-
so, to the studie of Aristotle, and of the Schoolemen. Where-
by it shall come to passe, that ere it bee long, they shall dabble
and prate on nothing so muche, as their owne dreampng deu-
ises, and make a Religion of their owne foolishne and absurde
phantasies: and as for the Laitie, they shall be vyue to haue none
other instruction, but what it shall please the Clergie to tarte
and prache vnto them. For, if it were otherwise, and that the
Laitie also might bee suffered to read the Scriptures, then
should the Popes also themselves, bee vyue to apply the
Scriptures, least they should be iustly reprehended of the Lai-
tie, and their faithlesse and forgerie detected. But marke these
wordes of Saint Peter, thus generally spoken vnto vs all,
that we should all bee readie, to geue an account and reason
of

of our Father. Where thou dost say to neither; nor yet the
 Pope, that is able to helpe thee, if thou standest upon this
 foundation of the Pope that is in thee: yet thou thou dost have
 nothing to say, but that thou beleeuest and wilt beleeue, as the
 Councelles, as the Pope, and as thy forefathers haue beleeued.
 For the Deuill will by and by replee against thee; y and saie
 what if thou haue erred? Whereby he will draw thee to haue
 neuer a woorde to saie, and so hale and drawe thee into Helles.
 And therefore lett answere be upon, to be veritaibly perswaded
 and grounded in those thinges whiche we beleeue, namely, that
 the Woorde of God is not that, whiche the Pope, or whiche
 our holie Fathers doe either beleeue, or saie; or we must not
 depende upon, nor trust vnto any persone whatsoeuer, but on-
 ly upon the verie expresse Woorde of God.

And therefore when thou art rebuked, rephyned, or (as
 though thou were an heretique) belinidred; any questions
 concerning thy Faith, or why thou beleeuest that by Faith
 onely thou shalt be saued: let thine answer be thus: Because
 I haue the expresse Woorde of God for my warrant, and eu-
 dent textes of the Scriptures that so teacheth me; as namely,
 Saint Pauls Rom. 8. The iuste shall liue by his Faith. And a-
 gaine, the woordes afore alleged by Saint Peter out of Esaie
 Chap. xlvij. as touching the liuely Stone Christ, where he
 saith: He that beleeueth on hym, shall neuer be confounded.
 These sure groundes doe I take vnto, and in so doing; I am
 certaine and sure that I cannot be deluded. For if thou wilt
 wilfully (as many foolish myndes persons vse) saie: Sir, we
 will relie and adhere to what soeuer the Generall Councell in
 this or in that point shall define and determine: and whatsoe-
 ver is there concluded; wee will stande vnto and maintain. I
 tell thee, who shewest thou see that so saiest, thou art a forlorne
 persone, and in a most miserable case. Let this rather be thy
 saying: what is it to me, what either this man or that man, ei-
 ther beleeueth or decreeth? For if he bying not the liuerre and
 true Woorde of God, what cometh to direct and perswade me,
 I will neither heare hym nor beleeue hym.

shew the nature thereof will saie: All thynges are now layd
 open to our view, that on many certaynly we may see, what
 to beleue, and therefore we must saie, that in this time we are
 concluded, what we must obserue, and what we must followe,
 It saie againe, that if thou dwell vpon that point, thou shalt in
 the meane season goe straight to the **Deuill**, who when thou
 art come to the last yinghe of life, and seest thou must dye, and
 yet knowest not what thou art bounden to beleue, thou shalt
 be holpen and relieved by one way or by another. And therefore it behooueth thee to knowe perfectly what
 thou art to beleue, and not herein to depende vpon the deter-
 mination and appointment of any other mannes. But firmly
 and resolutely to cleaue vnto the word of **God**, as if so be that
 thou desire to escape the paines of hell.

It shall also be verie expedient, and necessarie for such as
 be vnlearned, perfectly to learne, and faithfully to heare in ve-
 more some plaine and euident places of **Scripture**, and some
 such certain and infallible sentences, wherewith vpon a fall-
 downe thou maye leane, & stande. Amongst the which this maye be
 not, where the Lord saied vnto **Abraham**, **Gen. 22. 18.** Thy Seed
 shall possesse the gates of the earth, because he is
 firmly fixed in memorie, the surest Anchorholde, and faste
 stedfastlie to beleue it, and strongly to cleue vnto it, with this
 perswasion in thy self, Beholde, although he was, and all his
 Cardinall, and all his counsaill maintained the contrary, and
 would affirme any thing other wise then is here set downe, yet
 will I vnmoueably confesse and sticke vnto this, because I
 certaintie knowe this to be the Word of **God**, whiche ab-
 deth fast for ever, and can neuer deceiue mee. Nothing can be
 blessed but through this Seede. And to bee blessed is nothing
 els, but to bee freed and deliuered from all curse, that is, from
Deuill, **Death**, and **Hell**. Wherevpon it necessarily followeth,
 that hee whiche is not the seede of **Adam**, and though this Seede, is a
 damned soule and a member of **Sathan**: and that therefore
 our owne Works and Merits are nothing at all availeable to
 vs towarde our **Saluation**.

ye. The words *And nothing* is meant by that afore mentioned
place of *Saints Peter*. He that beleuech in that Stone, shall
not bee ashamed. Therefore if thou be approached by any, and
asked a reason of thy faith, say thus out of this place, and
saie: This is the foundation and ground where of my faith
which I knowe can not deceiue me, and therefore, I little care
what Pope or Bishoppe either teacheth or belieueth. If they
were true Bishoppes, as they ought to bee, they should be ze-
loufull, so painfull and so continually preach the foundation
of faith, that none among the Christians should be ignorant
of it. Whereas they continually cry out and say; that it is
not lawfull for the Kings people to read the Scriptures. And
therefore if thou bee asked, whether thou wilt consent and be-
lieue that the Pope is the head and where thou, Demand of the
thou shalt hee to be to wit, the head and ruler of all
Christians, Epistles and Bishops, say thus, I will not be-
cause thou hast a place out of *Saint Paul*, 1 Tim. 3. teaching
thee; That there should be some in the latter tyme, that
should teach the doctrines of Devils, forbidding to ma-
rie, and commanding to abstaine from meates, which God
hath created to bee receiued with thankes giuing of them
which beleeue and knowe the truth; See. These things
hath the Pope forbidden, which is so generally well knowne
that none can denie it, and therefore he is Antichrist. For what
forseist Christ either teacheth or commandeth, against that
hee both kicketh, and endeuoreth all that euer hee can, eche
waie to infringe it, and to establishe the contrary. That which
Christ hath left free, the Pope bindeth, and that which Christ
plainly saith not to be sinne, that with the Pope affirmeth to
bee sinne. *1 Cor. 15. 23.* *1 Cor. 15. 23.* *1 Cor. 15. 23.*
After this sorte therefore thou must learne to yeeld a reason
of thy faith. For of this bee assured, that a reason thereof thou
must yeelde, if not in this life, doubtlesse in the pinte of thy
death, thou shalt bee charged therewith. Whome Canst thou
Deuill will bee ready to take. Whose name thou
called the Pope Antichrist. Now, if thou bee not fullie furnished

shed with sufficient reasons, to perswade vnto you the cause why
 thou dost so, he will triumph ouer thee and goe away with the
 victorie. And therefore saint Peters meaning is here to pre-
 moue vs by the reason: That seeing we haue believed in Christ
 Iesus, we must make our reckoning to bee: exercised with
 diuers temptations and sundrie kindes of persecutions: in all
 whiche, we must bee strongly armed and comfortably shiel-
 ded with the hope and expectation of eternall life. And therefore
 when wee shalbe asked, why we so hope, it shall moste neede-
 fully stand vs bypon, to bee furnished and instructed with the
 Word of God, and there vnto onely to stick: and not
 onely furtheringe, the stablished and shapeth all such men
 haue utterly peruerced, to wreste and misconstrued this place, as
 they haue (in a manner) all the rest of the Scripture: mainte-
 ning and holping, that Heretiques are to be confuted and con-
 uincid by Reason, and by the light of Nature; by Aristotle
 and such like: because in the Latine text it is said, *ratio-
 nem reddere*. As though saint Peter meane that this should
 bee doen by humane Reason. Where vpon they grewe so fast
 in their dreamyng dotage, that in the ende they were not asha-
 med to saie, that the Scripture was too weak to refell and
 confute Heretiques: and therefore that the defectes therof must
 be supplied by Reason: and thus the right triall of true Faith
 must bee fetched out of the wisdom of mans brayne. Where-
 as our Faith, farre passeth all reason, as that whiche is the
 greates power and vertue of God. Therefore whē they wil not
 beleue thee, it shall be best for thee: to holde thy peace: and to
 rest thy self inwardly satisfied, that thou canst and dost proue
 all the foundations and ground worke of thy Faith out of the
 pure and liuely Word of God. But some of them will here
 saye for the and saie, What shalst thou that wee ought not
 to obserue the doctrines of men? Alredoe Peter and Paul,
 ges and Christ himself, send them: thou meetest with any
 such shauyless and independent persons; so blind and obstinate,
 as either to denye, or to doubt whether that which he thou prea-
 chest out of the Word of God; be the Word of God or no:

giue them no answer, but rather speake not communica-
tions with them, but reaine them: giuing this reason
them for a farewell, that thou wilt not be ready to giue such
eient reason of that whiche thou preacheſt out of the sacred
Scriptures: if that they will beleue and giue credit to the
Scriptures, thou dost a good deede to so winne and confirme
them: if they will looke for other helpes besides, reaine with
them. But here will some say, We shall the disciples of Christ
open to confusion, and bee troden downe. Com mis that thou art
God, whose quall it is, and who is better able to defend his
own cause. It shall therefore be very expedient for us, though
ble to requint our selues with the sacred Scriptures, where
by wee shall be able to stoppe the mouths of all gainsayers: be-
cause the number of them that usually make such and such
like objections is not without very rife.

I. 5. And that with meeknesse and reuerence,

When ye are questioned withall, of keue on touching
your faith, answer ye not with temp oppositions
or malapertnesse, neither with fury and swelling
dilemperance, as though you would be victorious as a maple
Tree, but doe it with meeke wisdom and subuillion, and ye
should stand to answer when before the Iudgement of God.
For it may be, that if thou shouldst be content and brought
to answer concerning thy faith, before Kings or great Prin-
ces, and that thou shouldst accertaine time also, very well pre-
pared and furnished thy self for the same purpose: With suffi-
cient knowe of summe places of the Scriptures, and thou shouldst
be able to stoppe the mouths of all gainsayers, it
shall be very profitable to encounter with their objections: it will be
able to stoppe thee, will be ready to silence thee, and to
of thy house, and by that meane to make thee out of counte-
nance and diminish thy courage, that thou shouldst be able to
doe that whiche thou pretendeſt, but discredit the cause and

Vpon the first Epistle

thy self, and to thy former furniture nothing added thereto. For he is so armed with instructions (skill, that he knoweth well enough how to wing from thee (as it were thy fighting sword out of thy hands) those places wherewith thou chiefie haddest armed thy self to buckle with thyne aduersaries, and to maintain the cause that thou haddest in hand: and so thy good purpose should come to none effect. For he knoweth also, howe thy purposes willes, and God suffereth it so to come to passe, thereby to repressse and pull downe thy pride, and insolence, and to make thee to humble thy self.

Therefore thou wilt not that suche a foyle should happen unto thee; if thou wilt thee to take it in hand with trembling and reuerent feare, and not to repose any manner of trust in thyne owne strength & abilitie, but onely in the Word of GOD, and promise of Christ, Math. x. When ye shall be brought before Kynge and Rulers for my sake, take ye no thought how or what ye shall speake: for it shall be giuen you in that houre, what ye shall saie: for it is not ye that speake, but the Spirit of your Father, which speaketh in you. Thou doest very well, at suche a tyme when thou must in suche case answer, to furnish thy self with sufficient store of textes and sentences of Scripture: but this withall thou must take speciall heede vnto, that thou doe not trust too much in the same, or insolently deale therein: least God take as well out of thy mouth, as out of thy memoire, that place of Texte, wherewith thou diddest purpose moste speciallie and strongly to assaile and encounter thyne Enemie, although thou were afore armed and stored with all the places and textes within the Scripture. Therefore thou haddest neede to tremble and feare. Wherewith thou dost together with the sentences of Scripture, be furnished, thou shalt be able to defende thy self and thy cause that thou hast in hand before Iudges and Magistrates, yea before the Devil himselfe. Onely take heede, that the flosse wherewith thou leanest, be the pure Word of GOD, and not the beggyle devices of mans fantasticall imaginations.

16 And haue a good conscience, that whē thei speake euill of you, as of euill doers, thei maie bee ashamed, whiche blame your good conuerſation in Chriſte.



Deſt thou ſhake Saint Peter aſide, for we can not eſcape (if we ſticke faſt to the proceſſion of the Goſpell) but he euill ſhoken of, reuiled, yea and condemned of the worlde in ſomuche that we ſhalbe accounted no better then the lewdeſt fellows and naughtieſt perſones that liue. And therefore we muſt arme our ſelues patiently and willingly to heare all theſe thynges, and onely beſore God to ſtande in reuerent feare, and to haue within vs the teſtimony of a good conscience. And then let the Deuill rage at vs, and all the worlde ſtampe and ſtare at vs: let them bothe backbite, reuile, and ſlaunder vs as muche as euer thei liſte: in the ende thei muſt be put to confuſion and ſhame, for ſo falſely and ſlaunderouſly accuſing vs. For when the Lorde God in the daie of uiliſtation (as Saint Peter ſaith) ſhall laye all thynges open and manifeſte, then ſhall we ſtande in ſafetie beſore hym, with a good conscience. Theſe excellent and viſible ſentences, are ſufficiently able to confirme and ſtrengthen vs, and alſo to keepe and conſerue vs in awe and feare.

17 For it is better (if the will of God be ſo) that ye ſuffer for well doynge, then for euill doynge.



It can not poſſibly bee, that thei (to whom heauen is appointed for their inheritance) ſhould here in this worlde liue in quiet ſtate, according to the ſaying of Scripture: ſeeing the ſame haue neither poſſeſſion nor portion in the kingdome of heauen. It is an Injunction indifferently appertaining, and equally alike liable vnto all Adams children and poſteritie, which was

Vpon the first Epistle

denounced to Adam by the mouche of God hymself. Gene. iij. In the sweate of thy browes shalt thou eate thy breade: And vnto Eue, In sorte we shalt thou bryng forth the Childen. Se-
 yng therefore that these externall incommodities, are indiffe-
 rently and alike inflicted vpon all persones, how muche more
 meete is it, for them to beare the Crosse vpon their shoulders,
 who shortly after shall be translated hence into the heauenlie
 kyngdome, there to enioye euertlastinge life, and life euertlasting.
 Therefore (saith he) if the will of God bee so, it is better that
 ye suffer for well doying. They which suffer for euill dooyng,
 and be seruedly, cary aboute with them an euill conscience, and
 are tormented with a double punishment: Whereas true
 Christians abide onely but the one halfe of this paine: because
 although they suffer outwardly muche paine, grief, anguise,
 fauente, vexation, tribulation and torment in their flesh, yet
 haue they inwardly in their Spirit and conscience, greater hope
 and consolation.

But here be hach for some certaine limited boundes, how
 we should submit our selues to affliction. And in that he saith
 if the will of God bee so, he giueth vs a profitable lesson and
 warning, that none should bee so madde, to imitate the cu-
 stom and maner of the Donatistes, of whom Saincte Augu-
 stine maketh mention: whoatching certaine textes and pla-
 ces of the Scripture, touchyng sufferynge and affliction, killen
 themselves, and wilfully theye themselves headlong doune
 into the Sea. **God** hath no pleasure in seeing vs to doe any
 kind of harme vnto our selues, nor to seeke any newfangled de-
 uise of bodily amovance. Let this bee our dyte and shoote an-
 her, sincerely to walke in Faith and brotherly Love, and then
 if it please the Lord to lay vnto our selfe any such thing as
 is necessarye for our good, to beare it with patience, let vs be
 not wilfully and willingly to beate it. And therefore our pre-
 posterous course doe thuse manye our selves take, whiche
 be to whippe and pesty, penyninge vnto to kill themselves
 with beating, thinking by that meanes to moue and winne
 Heauen.

This

This kinde of newe foune Religion, and willfull counter-
faite humilitie and affliction, in this command punishment of
the body, doth haile godward to be used, Coloss. iii. The must
mangle our bodie, and subdue our members, that they growe
not wanton, as unprofitablenesse, but wee make not violently
destroye them: This is the meaning of these wordes. (If the
will of God be so) which is as much to saie, as if God be
pleased to send any kinde of Chastitie or persecution vnto vs:
For then it is better to suffer, and then therein to be happie
and blessedder, if for well doyng thou abide and suffer affliction.

18 For Christe also hath once suffered for sinnes, the
just for the vniuste.



Here againe both saint Peter propounde and
sette before vs, for a patterne to imitate, our
Lorde Christe and his bitter passion: after the
rule whereof, wee ought to frame our selues,
and not presume to prescribe vnto our selues,
any newe deuised singularitie. For as Christe is a patterne to
all Christian Belouers, and to them all is sette downe for an
Example, so ought all men in generalitie to imitate his step-
pes: and in all their actions, professions, and functions of life,
what soeuer hee do, to haue respect vnto him, and after his de-
uises, readylablie to conforme themselves. And Saint Pe-
ter in this place in effecte saith thus: Christ was iuste and suf-
fered for well doing, for our sakes that were vniuste: But he
sought not to haue the Crosse vpon him, but rather chetymg
till the will of God was so appaunte, that he should drinke of
the Crosse of his painful passion. Vnto now ought we to
take him for Example, and in the whole course of our life, bring
it to remembrance, and to imitate. And this example saint Peter
here saith: secretly bring vnto vs, because he hath already
taught euery sort of persons, in what they sheweth his
their seuerall offices and duties, concluding the same with
this example of Christes passion.

Vpon the first Epistle

And this is here to bee noted, that he saith that Christ suffered once: which is as much to saie, as that Christ suffered and satisfied once for al, euen for all the finnes of the whole world, and not that he should for euery seuerall sinne, seuerally die. By which his death, once for all, he hath cleane taken away all the Synnes, of so many as in faith appoynted were vnto him, and faithfully beleue in him: All which are now deliuered from the danger of Death, as surely and as certainly as he hymself is now deliuered and freed from the power of Death.

18 The iuste for the vniuste.



Though he should saie: How much more ought we to bee willing to suffer, beying so sinfull, and so many waies deserving it, seeing that Christ was content to suffer death for our sakes, beying hymself moste iuste, for vs that were vniuste, and clogged with the chaines of so many horrible Synnes, wickednesse, and transgressions?

8 That he might bryng vs to God.



Al this is spoken, onely to instructe and teache vs in what sorte the Passion of Christe was, to witte, suche, that he died not for any cause of his owne, but to the intent to reconcile and bryng vs to God. How can that bee, wile thou saiest? Did he not offer vphymself? I answer: True it is, that he offered vphymself on the Crosse, for so many of vs as beleue in hym: In whiche his offering and oblation he offered vphymself, so that so many of vs as steadfastly beleue on hym, must also with hym, according to the flesh, suffer and be killed, euen as he suffered and died. God hath here in such sort placed vs, that wee liuyng in the Spirit, might yettue in the flesh, as afterwarde saint Peter declareth. But as we are offered vpon Christ (that is) as we ope with Christ, euen as he, according

bryng

dyng to the fleſhe truly died, ſo doe we live with hym in Spirit, even as he hymſelf doeth Spiritually live.

And was put to Death concerning the fleſhe, but was quickened in the Spirit.



His woorde Fleſhe in the Scripture is a common uſuall woorde, as alſo this woorde Spirit is: whiche twoo wordes the Apoſtles doe ever in a maner ſet, the one againſt the other. Now, the meanyng of theſe wordes is this: Chriſte in his Paſſion died and was taken out of this life, whiche is fleſhe and blood: ſuche fleſhe and blood as manue here in this worlde is cladd withall: the offices and functions whereof are theſe, Eoyng, Standyng, Eatyng, Drynkynge, Sleapyng, Watchyng, Seepynge, Hearynge, Touchyng, Feelyng, and to ſpeake all at one woorde, what ſoever is naturally to bee doene in this bodie, and is fraile and tranſitorie. To all theſe died Chriſte. Saincte Paule calleth theſe, the Naturall or Animall bodie, ſo that all other Creatures, haue the uſe of all theſe actions as well as we. But his fleſhe died not, in any other ſorte but accordyng to the fleſhe: that is, accordyng to thoſe Naturall and corporall functions, whiche are done and exerciſed by the bodie: To this life (I ſaie) Chriſte died, ſo that all theſe functions likewiſe died and ceaſed in hym, and hee hymſelf tranſported into another life. And beeyng quickened accordyng to the Spirit, tooke vnto hym a life Spirituall and ſupernaturall, comprehendyng and poſſeſſyng in it ſelf, all that life whiche Chriſte now poſſeſſeth, as well in Bodie as in Spirit. Altho now hath not any longer ſuche a carnall Bodie as he had afore, but a Spirituall bodie. And thus doeth ſaincte Paule expounde this place.

The very ſame, hope wee alſo at the latter daie to enioye: to witt, that our fleſhe and blood ſhall paſſe and bee altered in to a Spirituall life, wherein theſe our Bodies ſhal no more eate and drinke, begette children, digeſt, concoct, euacuate or any ſuche

Vpon the first Epistle

in the life: but shall live eternally in Spirit, and this bodie shall bee as cleare as crystal, for it shall be, yet much clearer. Fleche and blood shall not thenceforth bee naturall, there shall then be no such function either naturall or corporall, as in other Creatures now. *But of well as well.*

These bee in a maner the wordes whiche saint Paule teacheth. j. Cor. xv. The first man Adam (saith he) was made a liuyng Soule, and the last Adam was made a quicknyng Spirit. And it there followeth, That as we haue borne the Image of the earthie and naturall Man, so shall we beare the Image of the spirituall and heauenlie. From Adam wee haue all the offices and functions naturall, euen as brute Beastes haue, accordyng to our outward sences and faculties. But Christ liueth in the Spirit, and is fleche and blood, but not so as he did afore: all outward functions of bodily Sences are ceased in hym, he neither sleepech nor wakech, and yet knoweth he all thinges and is in euery place. Suche also shall wee be: for he is the first fructee, the vilation and first borne (as Dr. Paule saith) of the new creature: that is, he is the first that arose from the dead and receiued within a spiritual life. Therefore Christ doeth not liue accordyng to the Spirit, that is to saie, he is still yet perfect Man, but he hath a spiritual Body. And therefore that which is here said, is not to be taken as we usually doe, when we separate the Flesh and Spirit asunder the one from the other: but that the Bodie and Flesh are now spirituall, and that the Spirit is both in the Bodie and with the Bodie. If of saint Pauls meaning is not here, that Christ was raised by the holy Ghost, but by which the word Spirit after a general manner, as if a man should say, the Spirit doth this or that. For in the word, is not simple meane the holy Ghost, but rather that in the word, and the means force whiche worketh in vs by the operation of the holy Ghost.

19. By the which he also went, and preached vnto the spirits that are in prison.

20. Which were in ymages of disobedience,

This



His place I dooe take to bee as obscure and harde to bee understoode, as any in the newe Testament: insomuche that I confesse my self not yet to haue founde out the certaine meanyng thereof. First the words them selues doe sounde, as though Christ had preached vnto Spirites: I meane, the Soules of them that would not beleeue in the tyme that Noah built the Arke. The sense thereof beeyng some what harde to conceiue, hath hitherto so entangled mee, that neither can I aduouche any sounde interpretation of it, neither any other as yet that hath takē in hand the exposition thereof. Some peraduenture will not sticke to take these wordes so, as that Christ after his deathe on the Crosse, went downe into Hell, and preached to the Soules there: with whiche vain opinion I meane not here to enter disputation. But mee thinkes, these wordes doe very well admit an other sense & meanyng, to wit, that our Lorde Christ, after his ascension into Heauen, came in Spirite and preached, althet not bodily. For hee speaketh not now with any bodily voyce, as he also useth none of the other functions of corporall or bodily nature. And therefore, let vs take the wordes to signifie and meane, accoꝝpyng as thei sounde, that is, in Spirite: and that he preached to the Spirites in that his spirituall life. Wherevpon it also followeth that his preachyng then was spirituall, emplantyng the same in their hartes and Soules: so that, there was no neede for him to goe in bodie and preach with mouth for the same. These wordes of saint Peter proue not, that after he dyed, he went downe vnto the Ghosts that are in Hell to preache vnto them. For he saith thus: In whiche he went &c. Whiche is as muche as if he had saied: After he was deade accoꝝpyng to the fleshe and quickened accoꝝpyng to the Spirite, (that is) after hee had laied downe and left his life in the fleshe, and all other naturall workes and functions of his bodie, and had now taken vnto him a spirituall life and conuersation, as now he hath and doeth in heauen: then hee went and preached to the Spirites &c. Now it is most euident and cer-
taine,

Vpon the first Epistle

taine, that Christ descended not eftsloones to Hell, after he had receiued this his newe glorified life. And therefore wee must vnderstande, that he made this preachyng, after his Ascension into Heauen.

Seyng therefore that the wordes doe well beare to be vnderstood of a Spirituall preachyng: wee are to thinke that S. Peter in this place speaketh, of the Office of Christ: for that as the worde is outwardly preached by Cōpre, so worketh he inwardly in the harte. Hee entoynd his Apostles, to preache the Gospel bodily, but yet is hee hymself present spirituallly: and whatsoeuer the Apostles utter in outward speerche to the bodily eares of men, that doeth he speake and preache into the hartes and myndes of them inwardlie. And then preacheth hee to the Spirites, whom the Deuill holdeth captiue and in thraldome: so that wee take this worde (went) and these wordes preachyng to the Spirites that are in prison accordyng to the account and computation of God himself, because in the sight of Christe thei that haue been long since, are euen in the same state as thei bee that now presently liue. For his Kyngdome reacheth to the deade aswell as to the liuyng. In that life wherein hee now liueth, the Beginning, the Middle and the ende of the Worlde, are contein'd and reckened after one and the same account & all as one: although in this life these thinges bee not reckened so, but eche thyng accordyng to his orderly succession, as the Sonne after the Father, and so of others. All thinges lye naked to the sight of GOD, and are as now present vnto his eyes: and he in one moment or minute of tyme overlooketh and surueigheth all that is, was or shal bee. A thousande yceres with hym are but as one daie, as sainte Peter in his seconds Epistle declareth. And therefore the first man is as present vnto him, as the man that shalbe last bozne, for with one glaunce he beholdeth at once the whole Worlde.

Let this therfore be the meanyng of this place: that Christ now preacheth not any more corporallie, but is present in his Worlde, and thereby preacheth to the Spirites in their hartes. And here wee must note, that Saincte Peter useth a Figure

figure, named Synecdoche, which is, when the whole is taken for a parte: and contrariwise, when the parte is taken for the whole. For hee preached not altogether vnto them alone, but vnto all that are like vnto them, and of semblable disposition to theirs: As if a mā (for example sake) should now saie: This man preached among the Heluetians, who sometymes were vnder the gouernement of the Dukes of Austria. It hereby-pon by and by followeth not, that hee preached to them that sometymes were Vassalles to the Dukes of Austria, and are now long since dead: but it sufficeth to saie, that he preached to the people dwelling now, in that Countrie, which alsoe liued in suche subiection. And thus vnder the name of the parte, the whole is many tymes vnderstoode, and the whole againe oftentimes is put to signifie the Parte. And after this sorte must we by this life haue respect, and consideration of the other life.

This is the beste interpretation in my Iudgemente that can bee for this place: howbeit if any manne bying a better, I will bee glad (as meete it is) to allowe of it. But to be plaine, I can not at any hande bee perswaded to beleue, that Christe beeing quickened in Spirit (that is, hanyng now taken vnto hym a Spirituall life) did descend into Helles, and preache to the Soules there: speciallie, seeing the Scripture is flatte against any suche matter: affirming that when thynges are brought to that point, euery one shall receiue accordyng to as he hath dooen and beleueu. Againe, it is not certaine in what state the dead remaine. To conclude, the wordes themselves are against any suche meaning for the dead. Now, this is vndoubtedly true, that Christe is presente and preacheth in the harte, when as the faithfull Minister or vocall Preacher, with fruitte bittere and in bitter the Word of God into the Eares: and therefore wee maie boldly and without daunger, admit and embrace this interpretation of this place. He to whom God hath reuelled, and opened a better exposition, I wishe to be followed. The verie summe therefore of this our Interpretation is this: Christe beeing now quickened in Spirit (that is, after he was ascended into Heauen) preached afterwarde

Vpon the first Epistle

unto the Soules of menne, who afore vled to preache to their
bodies: among whiche Soules there were many Unbelouers
in the daies of Noah.

- 20 When once the long suffering of God abode in the
daies of Noah, while the Arke was preparyng,
where in fewe, that is, eight Soules were saued in
the water.



Here againe persisteth Sainct Peter, in alled-
ging and interpreting the Scriptures, in whiche,
his purpose is to draw vs so enure and exer-
cise our selues. And out of them he byngeth
the figure of Noah his Arke, whiche he also
explaneth. It is verie comfortable and proper, to fetch Simi-
litudes from suche manner of Examples as this: whiche order
Saincte Paule also followeth: Gala. iij. where he receiveth the
mysterie of the two Sonnes of Abraham, and also his two
Wives, and after ward expounded the same. And Christe also
Ihon. iij. speaketh of the Brasen Serpent, whiche Moses lieth
vp in the wilbernesse, Num. xxj. Suche pithie Similitudes
are easly learned, and willyngly hearkened vnto, and menne
commonly take greate delight in the hearyng of theim. And
therfore Saincte Peter here byngeth in by waie of compa-
rison, the Similitude of the Arke of Noah: whereby he bryefly
and in fewe woordes, and yet with a certaine pleasure, setteth
doun a sure lesson to confirme faith. And that whiche he
here setteth doun, to haue come to passe when Noah made the
Arke: after the same sort standeth the case now: that as he and
his, (euen eight Soules) were saued in the Arke, whiche was
caried vpon the Waters, so must wee also bee saued through
Baptisme: that Water did then once saue bothe menne and all
Creatures beside: and so Baptisme beyng receiued in faith,
prometh in vs whatsoever is carnall and naturall, and maketh
vs Spirituall: And this cometh to passe, when wee betake
our selues into the Arke, whiche signifieth and figureth our
Lorde

Loꝛde Chꝛiſt, oꝝ the Churche of Chꝛiſt, oꝝ the Goſpell whiche Chꝛiſte preached, oꝝ the Bodie of Chꝛiſte, in whiche weꝛe all hangẽ together by Faithẽ, and are deliuered from all euilles, euen as Noah by the Arke was ſaued from beeyng dꝛenched in the Waters. Gene. vii. Thus we ſee, how this example by hym here bꝛought, comprehendeth (as it were) compendioſly and bꝛieflly, bothe what Faithẽ is, and what the Croſſe is: what is Life, and what is Deaeth? Now, where ſoeuer there bee men that whollie depende vpon Chꝛiſt, there certainly is the Churche of Chꝛiſt: and there is vterly dꝛowned and killed, what ſoeuer is in vs that is euill, and that iſſueth and cometh from our old Adam.

- 21 To the whiche alſo the figure that now ſaucth vs, euen Baptiſme agreeth (not the puttyng awaie of the filthe of the fleſhe, but in that a good conſcience maketh request to God)



Care not hereby ſaued, in that the filth of pouꝛ bodie is cleane waſhed awaie, and nothyng els cleaſed but the Bodie, as the Jewes pꝛeciſely obſerued and vſed to doe, (foꝛ ſuche kinde of puriſyng is of no moment noꝝ foꝛce: but it is a good Conſcience makynge request to God, that ſaucth you. When as ye feele within you a good Conſcience, chearfullie and confidently daryng to ſhewe it ſelf, and to appeare befoꝛe God, as though there were a conenaunt oꝝ bargain betwene thein, and therevpon dare boldly ſaie: This hath my Loꝛde God pꝛomiſed me, and I am ſure he will perfoꝛme it, foꝛ he is ſuche a one, as can not deceiue. If ye thus ſtedfaſtly cleaue vnto his Woꝛde, and whollie depende vpon hym, you can not miſſe but bee ſaued. And the Meane whereby we thus obtayne Saluation, is Faithẽ: and not any outward Woꝛke, that we our ſelues are able any waies to doe.

Vpon the first Epistle

21 By the resurrection of Iesus Christe,

Whis small portion of wordes hath Saincte Peter purposely added to that whiche went before, to shewe a reason of the Faith that is grounded hereupon: because that after Christe died, and descended into the lower partes, he staid not still there, but anone arose againe from the deade. For if he had continued still in Death, we had remained still in our miserable estate, forloyn as wee were asofore. But because he is risen againe from the deade, and now sitteth on the right hande of his Father, and hath caused the same to bee published and preached vnto vs, to the intente wee should belceue on hym, we haue therefore a certaine conuauant, or promise with GOD, vnto the whiche wee certainly and vnfeignedly dooe truste, and by the whiche wee are saued and preserved, euen as Noah was by the Arke. Thus therefore hath Saincte Peter laied before our eyes, and made the whole Arke spiritual vnto vs: in whiche is neither Fleشه nor Blood, but a good Conscience to Godward, and that is Faith.

22 Whiche is at the right hande of GOD, gone into heauen, to whom the Angelles, and Powers, and Mightes are subiecte.

All this he speaketh, to make our Faith the perfecter and stronger. For it behooued, that Christe should ascende into Heauen, and bee made Lorde of all Creatures, and that all power what soeuer, and where soeuer, should bee subiecte vnto hym, to the ende he might aduance and bying vs thither, and make vs also Lordes of all thynges.

All whiche be of singular force and efficacie, to comfort and confirme our hartes and mindes. For hereby are we assuredly perswaded, that all thynges through Christ and by Christ, are made to serue vs: That whatsoeuer power there is in Heauen, or in Earth, yea Death & Demitt, all are hereby enioyned and compelled to serue vs, and for our vles, euen as they are bound to serue Christ, and to lye in all subiection vnder his ferte.

The



The fourth Chapter.



Orasmuche then as Christ hath suffred for vs in the flesh, arme your selues like wise with the same mynd, which is, that he which hath suffred in the flesh, hath ceased from sinne,

2 That he henceforward should liue (as muche tyme as remaineth in the fleshe) not after the lustes of men, but after the will of God,

3 For it is sufficient for vs that wee haue spent the tyme part of the life, after the lust of the Gentiles, walkyng in watonnesse, lustes, drunkenesse, in gluttonie, drinkynges, and in abominable idolatries.

4 Wherein it seemeth to them strange, that ye runne not with them vnto the same excesse of ryote: therefore speake thei euill of you.

5 Whiche shall giue accounts to hym, that is readie to iudge quicke and deade,

6 For vnto this purpose was the Gospell preached also vnto the dead, that thei might be condemned, according to men, in the fleshe, but might liue accordyng to God, in the spirite.

7 Now the ende of all thinges is at hande. Be ye therefore sober, and watchyng in praier.

8 But aboue all thinges haue seruent loue among you: for loue couereth the multitude of sinnes.

9 Be ye harberous one to an other, without grudgyng.

10 Let every man as he hath receiued the gift, minister the same one to an other, as good disposers of the manifold grace of God.

11 If any man speake, lett him talke, as the woordes of God

Vpon the first Epistle

GOD. If any man minister, let him doe it, as of the abilitie, which God ministreth, that God in all thinges maie bee glorified through Iesus Christe, to whom is praise and dominion for euer, and euer, Amen.

12 Dearely beloued, thinke it not straunge concernyng the fire triall, whiche is among you to proue you, as though some straunge thing were come vnto you:

13 But reioyce, in asmuch as ye are partakers of Christes sufferings, that when his glorie shall appeare, ye maie bee glad and reioyce.

14 If ye be rayled vpon for the Name of Christe, blessed are ye: for the spirite of glorie, and of God resteth vpon you: whiche on their parte is euill spoken of: but on your parte is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murtherer or as a thiefe, or an euill doer, or as a busie bodie in other mens matters.

16 But if any manne suffer as a Christian, let hym not bee ashamed: but let hym glorifie God in this behalte.

17 For the tyme is come, that iudgment must beginne at the house of God. If it first begin at vs, what shall the ende be of them whiche obeye not the Gospell of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saued, where shall the vngodly and the sinner appeare?

19 Wherefore let them that suffer accordyng to the will of God, commit their soules to him in well doying, as vnto a faithfull Creator.



Forasmuche Thomas Christ hath suffered for vs in
the fleshy arme your selves likewise with the same
mynd, which is, that he which hath suffered in the
fleshe, hath ceased from sinne: and so we may see
that he which hath suffered in the fleshe, hath ceased from sinne.



Saint Peter still continueth in the same Argu-
ment that he had in hande in the other Chapter
afore. For as he there generallie exhorted vs to
suffer affliction and persecution (if so the will of
God bee) and for the same, sette Christ for an ex-
ample vnto vs: so doeth hee here more largely handle and con-
firme the same, making thereof as it were a repetition: say-
ing: Forasmuch as Christ our Graund Capitaine and head
suffered in the fleshe for vs, and also by his bitter passion redee-
med vs, and in his suffering became an Example vnto vs; it is
most meete and our bounden duties are to imitate him; and to
bee likewise armed and furnished, for, the life of Christ, and
especially his passion, is set doune vnto vs in the Scriptures
after two sortes. First, as a free Gift giuen vnto vs (as Saint
Peter in the third Chapter afore hath written describer and
set him doune vnto vs) moste chiefly labouring to builde vs on
him by faith, and teaching vs that by the Blood of Christ all
our sinnes are expiated and clearely done awaie, and we freed
from the yaldome of our transgressions; and restored to the
participation of eternall life: saying that Christ was freely
giuen vnto vs: all which benefices can not vs bee none other-
wise conceiued and apprehended then by faith onely. And of
this hee spake afore, where he saied, that Christ once suffered
for our sinnes. This is the principall and the chiefest point
of all, and in the holie Scriptures set doune as most excellent.
And secondly, Christ was giuen and set for vs to imitate, as an
Example or patterne for vs to imitate: as hee saied afore
For when as wee haue once apprehended and taken hold
of Christ as a free Gift, by faith, wee must needs endeuour
our selues and haue all our studies to imitate and resemble
him in the whole course of his life and passion. And this doeth

Vpon the first Epistle

North. Latet. I Peter here commendeth vnto vs, Chyffes passion.
 He purposeth to speake not here of the woordes of Loue, where
 in wee serue our Neighbour, which bee properly called Good
 woordes (for of them hath he already spoken very sufficiently)
 but of suche woordes as concerne our owne bodies: as namely,
 when wee serue our selues, and bee so carefull of our owne e-
 states, that our Faith (while wee mortifie our Sinnes) may
 be the stronger, and we our selues the fitter to serue our Neigh-
 bour. For when as I doe tame and hyde myne owne bodie,
 and keepe it vnder, that it waxe not wanton and proude to la-
 ciousnes, I shall not haue any delight to enueigle my neigh-
 bours wife or his daughtre to satysfie my inordinate lustes.
 So likewise, if I my self kill and quench in mine owne mynde,
 the flames of spightfull enuie and cankered hatred, am I not a
 greates deale the fitter to deale louingly and gentlie with my
 neighbour? I haue oftentimes afore saied, that although by
 Faith we bee fullie iustified, and haue Chyffe with all his me-
 rites fullie our owne; yet oughte we to applye our selues to
 good woordes, and to seeke all that we can in the benefite and
 commoditie of our Neighbour. For we are neuer perfectly
 purged and cleane so long as we dwell in this worlde: there is
 no man but feeleth and findeth in his Bodie a Storehouse of
 many euill lustes and filthy desires. For Faith beginneth to
 mortifie Sinnes; and to hyng with it an heauenty life: but it
 is not as yet here perfect and strong enough to doe that which
 it would: Euen as Chyffe reasoned of the Samaritan, which
 was not yet wholly restored to health, although his woundes
 were bounde vp, and charge enough giuen for his curyng and
 looking to: so saith it with vs. For whē we beleue, our wound-
 es are bounde up: that is to saie, the infection and disease which
 by propagation is deriued vnto vs from Adam, is begonne to
 bee healed: whiche is brought to passe (as wee see) in some, re-
 missely and slowly; in other, some, speedily and quickly, accord-
 ingly as euery one chastiseth himself and represseth his flesh,
 and hath a fuller measure of Faith giuen vnto hym.

And therefore, when we haue attained these two, Faith,

and

and Charitie, our next studie and care ought to be, from wher
wee dye, to shewe and poure these reliques of Spine, yet
harbroughing within vs. And therefore saith saint Peter,
Arme ye your selues likewise with the same in ynde; that is,
conferme your myndes, and strengthen your hartes in this ca-
gitation, to dooe as Christ hath dooen aloofe you. For if wee be
right Christians, wee ought thus to thinke with our selues.
My Lorde GOD hath suffered for me, hath shed his precious
blood for me, and hath suffered Death on the Crosse for me;
why should I bee such a backarde, to bee unwilling to suffer
any kinde of affliction? For, if our Lorde hymself issue out in-
to the hunte and hysse of the Battaille, how muche more
meete is it for vs, beeing his poore seruantes, to abide
and undertake any daunger? These cogitations would a-
nimate vs to yeaue into, and boldly to aduenture to giue the
answert vpon any daungerous affaires what soeuer.

This woorde Fleche signifieth not onely the Bodie, consti-
tuting of Fleche and Blood, Skinne and Bones; butt all what
soeuer cometh from Adam. So saith God Gen. ii. My
Spirite shall not alwaies strugge with manne, because he is but
Fleche. And Esaie likewise; Chap. xl. All Fleche shall see the
sauiing health of God: That is, it shall bee manifested before all
menne in the worlde, So also saie wee in our Creed, after the
the resurrection of the fleche, (that is) that all menne shall a-
rise againe. Fleche therefore signifieth the whole manne the
same, euen as he liueth in this life. Now the two; howe the
Fleche are in an excellent order, reckoned by and not counted
by saint Paule, Gala. v. And not those grosse actions and wor-
kes of the fleche onely, as Fornication; but the chiefest and
greatest wise that bee, as Holinesse, and hereafter, whiche be
resist not in the Bodie onely, but rather in the Reason. Note
therefore, that Manne, together with his Reason, Will, and
all inward motions, (Soule and Bodie) is called Fleche, and
that because with al his power both inwardly and outwardly,
he pursueth and hunteth onely for those things that are
carnall, and delightfull in the Fleche. Euen so saith Saith be

Vpon the first Epistle

Peter in this place, that Christ suffered in the Fleſhe: where as it is certaine, that his Paſſion was not onely in the Fleſhe, but in his Soule alſo, whiche aboue that moſte extreme agonia, whereof Elaiſe ſpeaketh.

And after the ſame ſorte muſt we alſo take this, that followeth: He whiche ſuffereth in the Fleſhe, ceaſeth from Synne. For this is not the meaning of it, that he whiche hath his head chopped off, or his boodie onely diſmembred, ceaſeth from Synnes: but this ſuffering in the Fleſhe comprehendeth in it, what ſouer it be, that aggreueth and vtterly diſcontenteth Man, or that whiche ſhal bee his happy willing lie to ſuffer and beare: what Piferie, Calamitie, Uexation, or neceſſitie ſo euer it be: For there are a greene ſort, that beeing ſounde in boodie, are (knowingly ſtanding) ſhwardly in ſynne greatly perplexed and diſquieted, and in harte greteuſly tormented. Now, if theſe grieues be laied vpon them, for Chriſtes cauſe, it is good and commodious for them: for he that is afflicted in the Fleſhe (ſaith he) ceaſeth from Synne. For this purpoſe is the Croſſe very profitfull, becauſe thereby Synnes are qualiſied, and greatly alaied: For when a Sinne once beginneth earnestly, and from the verie bottome of his harte to repent, it is wonderfull to ſee, how ſobne and how quickly Luſte, Enuie, hatred, and other Synnes doe baniſhe a waile and ceaſe. Wherefore, God hath laied the Croſſe on vs, thereby (as it were) to compell and perſuade vs forwarde, as well to beleue in hym, and to put our truſt in hym, as alſo that wee ſhould teache our helping hande one to another, through Loue.

That he henceforth ſhould liue (as muche tyme as he might) without ſinne in the Fleſhe, nor after the liſtes of the world, nor of the fleſh, but after the will of God.



Our parties and vices are, as in the whole courſe of our life, to by the Croſſe and daily chaſtiſing of our ſelues, to conquer and ſubdue our Fleſhe, and to bying it in ſubiection: not with intent ther-

by

by to merite any thyng towards our Saluation, but to lye we
our felues gratefull and duefull vnto God. Not after the lu-
stes of miene, (saith he) that is: We must not doe it, to please
either our felues or others thereby. For wee must not fashion
our felues like vnto this worlde, as Saincte Paule writeth in
the xij. Chapter to the Romaines. Whatsoeuer the worlde re-
quireth of vs, that must we refraine and so beare.

3 For it is sufficiente for vs, that wee haue spent the
time paste of the life, after the luste of the Gentiles
walkyng in wantonnesse, lustes, drunkennesse, in
gluttonie, drinynges, and in abhominable Idola-
tries.



WE haue already too muche cockered our fel-
ues, and been too muche giuen to our owne wa-
ton belites: for before wee receiued the Faith,
wee spent our tyme and bestowed our liues,
according to our owne sensuall appetites, in no
better soyte then very Gentiles: And therefore we must strue
and endeuour our felues to consecrate, and direct the residue
of our life, according to the will of God, and so doe that which
maie bee acceptable vnto him. For we haue our Enemy with-
in our owne bosome, wee foster and nourish hym within our
owne fleshe: there and from thence the craftie and moste se-
cretie enemy (as it were) out of an ambush, pryncly and se-
cretly setteth vpon vs: and that not with any grosse and appa-
raunt vices, but rather with the credite, folitie, and estimation
of the fleshe, which is called by Saincte Paule, The wisdom
of the fleshe. j. Cor. j. This beeyng now beaten downe, all the
reste would easily and with little adoe bee repressed and hau-
quished: For this oftentimes annoyeth and hurteth our neigh-
bour, and that so closely and secretly, as that it can not bee de-
scryed or espied.

Saincte Peter calleth that Wantonnesse, when with fasti-
uous wordes and gestures, the luste of the harte and minde

Vpon the first Epistle

is stirred vp and although no actuall dealing ensue thereby: and when either in speaking or in listening to others that be leude and vchast talke, a maime any waie intemperately behaueth hymself: so that anone after, there bee enkindled naughtie desires and inordinate motions, yea, and many tymes burst out into open acte. Thereout sometyme springeth Idolatrie also, whiche in the sight of God is a thyng abhominable. This mischieuous wickednesse (if wee bee not warie and carefull, to keepe our Faith vnspotten, will geue nere to touche vs. For if we once loose and make shipwacke of our Faith, wee are mooste sure withall to loose God also, and so shall we committe moxe grosse and horrible Idolatries, then euer any Gentiles did, and therefore it standeth vs greatly in hande, to looke well to our selues.

4 Wherein it seemeth to them straunge, that ye run not with them vnto the same excesse of riot: therefore speake thei euill of you;

5 Whiche shall giue accomptes to hym, that is ready to iudge quicke and dead.



I haue heretofore ledde a Heathenlike life, and now because ye haue forsaken that trade, it seemeth vnto them that still wallowe in the same myze, a verie straunge thing, yea, a verie soule and foolishhe parte of you: not sticking to saie: Loe, what foolishhe fellows bee these, that thus thei renounce all worldly iolitie, and dispossesse themselves at once from all the delights of this life? But suffer ye them to haue this their vaine talke, let them accompte this your conversion, and alteration very straunge, and let them dispaire and despyle your purpose as vnsustayn and absurd. The daye will come, when thei must be called to their reckoning, and giue an accompte of their dealings: and therefore in the meane space, commit ye all thynges vnto God, that will iudge all thynges accordyng to right.

6 For vnto this purpose was the Gospell preached also vnto the deade, that thei might bee condemned, accordyng to menne, in the fleshe, but might liue accordyng to God, in the Spirite.

7 Now the ende of all thynges is at hande.



This place againe is somewhat straunge and difficult. The woordes dooe plainly saie, that the Gospell was preached not onely to the liuyng, but also to the Dead, and yet neuertheless he addeth these wordes, That thei might be condemned, accordyng to menne, in the Fleshe. Now, thei that are dead, haue no Fleshe: wherefore these woordes can not be vnderstoode other wise, then of them that be aliue. How soeuer wee take it, the phrase is somewhat straunge. Whether the whole texte and sentence in this place be perfecte, or whether some wordes be missyng, I will not take vpon me to define. But thus doe I vnderstande this place, and am certainly perswaded in the same, that it belongeth nothyng to vs, how and after what maner GOD meaneth to condemne the Gentiles whiche dyed many hundred yeares agoe: For it behooueth vs rather to looke and consider what he will doe to them that yet are aliue in the worlde.

This woorde Fleshe is so to bee vnderstoode as was afore declared to witte, that it entierly signifieth the whole Man, as he liueth, as also he is called all Spirite, when he careth for the thynges that be of the Spirite. These be so mingled together, as if one should say of him that is wounded: this man is whole, if but onely the better parte in hym be wholly cured. For he is saied to be wounded but onely in that parte, where in he was stricken. So like wise in a Christen man, the Spirite ought to haue the chiefe Souerainty. Therefore saith hee, that thei are condemned in the fleshe: that is, accordyng to the outward man: but accordyng to the inward man, which is the Spirit, thei be saued and liue.

But how commeth this to passe, that he saith, they liue, and

and yet notwithstanding calleth them dead. Truly; accordyng to my poore skill and capacitie (for I will not that this my interpretation should preiudice and foreshall the meaning of the holie Ghost, but that I dutifullie peeld my self to them that bying a better) I dooe thinke, that by those whom he calleth Dead, he meaneth Infidels. For it carieth no likelihood of truth, to saie that the Gospell was preached to them that be departed out of this life. Unlesse saintes & others meaning bee this: that the Gospell was so generallie and vniuersallie in the world proclaimed, and so openly in every place rung out, that it was hidden neither to the quicke nor to the dead; neither to Angelles, neither yet to Devils; that is to say, it was not preached secretly in corners and in huckermucker, but so publickly and openly that al Creatures, if they had eares to heare, might heare: accordyng to the tenour and effect of that Commission and charge, giuen by Christ himself, Mat. xvi, Goe ye into all the worlde and preache the Gospell to every Creature. Now, when it is in this sorte preached, it findeth some, whom accordyng to the Flethe it condemneth, but in Spirite it maketh them to beginne to liue.

7. Now the ende of all thinges is at hande.



And this sentence also seemeth very strange. There are now passed aboue a thousande and five hundred yeares since Sainct Iohannes wrote this Epistle, whiche is no small tyme to looke for the ende of all thinges to appoache. But he saith, that the ende of all thinges is alreadie come; and is now present. And so saith saint Iohn also in the seconde Chapter of his first Epistle. This (saith he) is the last tyme; Unlesse therefore suche an excellēt Apostle had plainly saied, that the ende of all thinges is at hande, it might haue been saied again, that he had erred, and not to be sheweth. And now we are stedfastly beleue, that (no liuing but) a true Apostle hath spoken it. That he meaneth in so saying, he himselfe declareth in his

his seconde Epistle, where he reciterh a reason why he saith
that this so long a space is but a short tyme, and nere at hande.
One daie (saith he) is with the Lorde as a thousande yeares;
and a thousande yeares as one daie. But wee must undoubt-
edly thinke, that there resteth not so many yeares till the dis-
solution and ende of the world, as haue continued from the be-
ginnyng vnto the tyme wherein this was written. Neither
must wee looke that this life shall continue yet twoo or thre
thousand yeares from the natiuite of Christ, for the ende wil
be sooner then wee thinke.

Be ye therefore sober and watchyng in praier.

But above all thinges haue seruent loue amōg you:
for Loue couereth the multitude of synnes.



Ere wee see, to what ende Continencie & So-
brietie are needefull, and whereto thei serue: to
wit, that we maie bee the readier to praie bothe
for our selues and also for our neighbors. Fur-
thermore, our Loue can not be seruent, yf we
wee so chastice our bodie, that thei maie be apt to receiue and
ledge Loue within vs. This sentence saint Peter borroweth
out of the Chapter of the Prouerbs. Hatred stirreth vp con-
tentions; but Loue couereth the multitude of synnes. This
therefore is his meanyng: Chastise your fleshe, and quenche
ye the lustes thereof; for if ye doe not diligently endeavour to
doe so, ye shall easilie offende one another, and not be easie and
willing to forgive one anothers offences. And therefore strine
to repress and subdue the affections and lustes of your fleshe:
for so shal ye bothe loue one another, and willingly forgive one
another, if your conuerye synnes.

This place is by some so wrested as though it did seeme to
make against Faith, for this is their sayng: Thou affirmest
that man is iustified onely by Faith, and that no man can be
deliuered from the guilt of his Synnes, by his workes. How
chaunceth it then, that bothe Solomon and S. Peter affirme

Vpon the first Epist'e

and saie, that Sinnes are couered by Loue. Solomon mean-
ing and words are in effect these: he that wellet is with any
hatred against an other, erreth not to practise and stirre vp
contentions and brawlinges: But where sincere loue is, it co-
uereth Sinnes and gently pardoneth any offences. Where
anger and wrath haue take holde, there is a man outward,
Stubborne, harde to perswade to any reconciliation, remaineth still
full of indignation and spight: but when a manne is endued
with Loue, he will not be incensed and moued to any garboile
and vniquietnesse, though he bee greatly prouoked therunto:
he curteously couereth, hideth and winketh at all thinges, as
though he sawe them not. So that this word (Couer) wher-
of both Solomon and saint Peter speake, when they saie, that
Loue couereth the multitude of Synnes, must haue relation
to our Neighbour and not vnto God. For as it is Faiche one-
ly, whiche couereth my Sinnes before God, so is it Loue that
couereth the sinnes and faulces of my Neighbour. For as the
mere loue of God to mewarde, couereth my Sinnes, when as
I faithfully and stedfastly beleue that God will not looke vpon
them nor punish the them: so ought I also with my Loue to-
warde my Neighbour to couer his sinnes towarde mee, that
I bee not therewith offended. And therefore (saith he) Aboue
all thinges: haue seruent loue one to an other, that ye maie
couer and hide one an others faulces. And this is further to be
noted, that this Loue couereth not one or two Sinnes onely,
but the multitude of Sinnes: it can not be drawen by any pro-
uocation to bee so angry, but that it couereth all. The same of
so hath sainte Paule. Cor. xiii. Where he doeth (as it were)
expounde this place. Loue suffreth all thinges, beleueth all
thinges, it hopeth all thinges, it endureth all thinges: that is,
it thinketh the beste of euery thing; it can patiently beare all
thinges, and take well in worth whatsoeuer it bee.

9 Bee ye harborous one to an other, without grud-
gynge.

10 Let euery man as he hath receiued the gift, mini-
ster the same one to an other.

De



It is harbozous, whiche cherefully and hartlie receiueth and entertaineth Strangers. As when the Apostles trauailed thzough diuers Countries, and preached where thei went, sending their disciples abroade to sundrie places, it was requisite that thei should mutualie bee harbozous one to an other. Whiche example were good to be moze put in we nowadaies then it is: that wee haupng the gift of preaching, should like wise trauaile from place to place, from Citie to Citie, from house to house, and not to sitte still in one place: to see where any were twake, that wee might comforte him: if any were fallen, that wee might raise him vp, and like wise to doe suche other dueties as to an Apostolicall function belongeth.

Now, all this must bee doen without grudgng (saith Sainct Peter) not as though we were loath to doe it. And this is one office or duetie of Love, as this is likewise whiche next followeth, namely, that wee should with the giftes wherewith God hath endued vs, minister one to an other. The Gospell requireth, that every man should bee as an others Seruaunt, and to minister and serue to the necessitie of an other in that vocation and function wherunto he is called, to the best of his abilitie: accordyng to the measure of that Talent that is committed vnto hym, and accordyng to that state and condition of life, wherein every one is placed. For it is not hereby meant, neither is it the will and commaundement of GOD, that the Pastor should minister and bee at becke to his Seruaunt, nor that the Handmaide should haue the rule ouer her Mistresse, or that the King should bee co:porallie seruiceable to a Begger: for he can not abide that that authoritie and high degres of superiouritie, wherein thei are placed should either bee disquieten or diminished. But hee requireth that every one in harte and Spirite should serue an other: that although thou bee of high calling and authoritie, yet maiest thou none other wise vse thy authoritie but to the commoditie and benefite of thy Neighbour. And in this sort, is it requisite and conuenient for the Pastor to further and helpe his Seruaunt with al the seruice

Vpon the first Epistle

he can, wherein he yet remaineth a Saitter still, and to lose the
maie repyte and accompt himself in higher degree of calling
then his Seruaunt: but a man maie not liue by himself in the
pride of his harte for the same, but to thinke of himself, as of a
Seruaunt, insomuche that he could finde in his harte (if it so
seemed good to the Lorde) euen to bee a Seruaunt. This in-
warde perswasion ought also to be in the goodly, in euery state
and degree.

10 As good disposers of the manifolde grace of God,

GOD hath not giuen a like measure of grace and
giftes to euery one of vs. And therefore euery one
must looke aboute hym, and consider with hymself
whereto he is made fitte of the Lorde, and what
gift it hath pleased God in mercy specially to endue him with-
all. Whiche when he hath thought, I kanned, and exactly no-
ted in hymself, his duettie is there with to serue his neighbour,
and that in suche sorte as here is moze at large particularly set
doun by saint Peter, sayng.

11 If any manne speake, let him talke as the wordes
of God.

That is, if any manne haue the gift of preaching and
teaching, lette hym preache and teache, as sainte
Paulle Roma. xij. willet hym: That no manne bee
wise in his owne conceipt, nor presume to know more then
is meete for hym to vnderstande, but that euery one vnder-
stande accordyng to sobrietie, as God hath deale to euery
manne the measure of Faith. For as wee haue many mem-
bers in one bodie, and all members haue not one office, so
wee beeyng many, are but one in Christ, and euery one, one
an others members, hauyng giftes that are diuers, accordyng
to the grace that is giuen vnto vs. And immediately after in
the same Chapter he addeth: If any manne haue Prophecies,

let

Let hym Prophecie accordyng to the proportion of Faither:
If he haue an office, Let hym waite on his office: Or he that
teacheth, on his teachyng: After suche an order and course
worth he teache in other of his Epistles, as namely, j. Cor. xij.
And Ephe. iij. And this is the cause, why God hath diuersely distributed
his gifts vnto menne, namely, so the intent wee should vse
them to the benefite and mutual helpe one of an other: special-
ly and chiefly thri that bee in any manner of publique office or
function, whether it bee in the ministerie and preaching of the
Woorde of God, or in any other. For the office of preaching
that properly belongeth, whiche beate saint Peter prescribeth:
namely, vnto whomsoever the office, vacation, and charge of
preaching the Woorde of GOD is allotted, let hym speake,
As the woordes of GOD. Whiche counsel and lesson ought
most carefully to bee taken heede vnto, that no man presume
to preache or teache any thing, whereto he hath not the ex-
presse Woorde of GOD for his warrant, and except he bee
most certaine, that the same bee directly to bee auouched out
of the sacred Scriptures. Whiche heeryng so, what might bee
thought of the Pope, and of his dirtie Digges & traditions?
One wee not see his mouth with this ouerwoyde notably stop-
ped: This I saie, to the intent euery one might manifestly see
how shamelesly and rascally he hath aggraued and basified him-
self, to bee saint Peters Heire and Successour, not making
any account at all, of that whiche saint Peter in this place
prescribeth and willet.

II. If any man minister, let hym doe it, as of the abilitie,
and such whiche God hath giuen him: or psonally

No soeuer executeth any function in the Church, or
hath the cure of Soules committed vnto hym, might
not deale as he like hymself, or to ouer rule matters
accordyng to his owne sensuall will, but rather might he saie
Culpe. I am a psonate, the people muste all listen to that
I say.

Vpon the first Epistle

whiche I saie, and obserue my Lawes, Commandmentes, and In-
 structions without gainesaying. For God requireth this, that no
 manne minister, or doe any thing, contrarie or repugnant to
 that whiche he commaundeth and appointeth. A prelate of
 the Bishoppe (I saie) ought to dooe no thing in the Church, bu-
 lesse he be certaine and sure of the warrantie thereof by Gods
 Word. For God can not abide to haue his seruice stumbled
 and mingled at pleasure, with euery foolish gage, and
 light tromperie. And therefore he ought to haue an assurance
 and certaintie in his minde and conscience, that euen GOD
 sothe speaketh and worketh in hym; and to stande vpon so sure
 a grounde for the veritie thereof, that his faith dare boldly
 witness with hym, and saie: Whatsoeuer I haue spoken, and
 what soeuer I haue doone or dealt herein, I am so out of doubt,
 that the same in eche respect is consonant to the Word & will
 of God, that I am ready and dare to seale the same with my
 blood, & to confirme it with my death. For other wise, if I wa-
 uer and dore this waie and that waie, not knowing whose
 cause and businesse I haue in hande, my faith is builded vpon
 the sande, so that the Deuill may aduersarie, is able to
 shake and tumble it whiche waie he list. And therefore we are
 here straightly forbidden, not to relpe vnto, nor to allow what
 soeuer decree or constitution these Bishoppes list to obtrude
 and enioyne, vntill they stande vpon a sure grounde, that the
 thynges whiche they doe, are allowed of God, yea doen of God
 himselfe: and vntill they be able to saie: Doe this, for it is the
 will and commaundement of GOD, and we haue his expresse
 Word and Commaundement for our warrant. If they be
 not able to sweare thus, they ought to be accounted as Lpers
 and deceiuers: muche lesse ought any Christian to prebe vnto
 them therein any obedience or subscription. For, the Lorde hath
 so appointed, that our Consciences shoulde not elsewhere be
 staied, but vpon the moste sure and infallible Rocke. And thus
 muche for publicke functions, wherein it is not lawfull for vs
 at any hande, to followe our owne wilfull deuises, and sensu-
 all considerations, but to obeye and folow the word of God.

er, unlesse wee bee undoubtedly assured, that it standeth with
the will and Woorde of God. Wherewith wee euidently see, how
cleane againste the Kyngdome of the Pope, and his Pretred
Bishoppes (as thynges therein are now handled) Saint Pe-
ters mynde and Iudgement was, long before any Pope were
knowen in the worlde, to rule the roste in such a Pontificallie,
as since they haue doone.

II That God in all thynges maie be glorified, through
Jesus Christe, to whom is prairie and dominion for
euer, and euer, Amen.



Would haue you so sure and certayne, that that
whiche you speake and doe, God hymself spea-
keth and dooeth, that ye maie therein glouise
God as the aucthour thereof, humbly thanking
him for his bounteous gift: whiche thing ye can
not doe, when ye doe any thyng, whereof ye see not sure whe-
ther God allowe it, or no. But beinge sure and certayne there-
of, how can ye chooseth but with moste humble shaukes to praie
and extoll so good, so gracious, and so bounteous a Lorde, who
vouchsafeth to giue his blessed Woorde to speake in you, and
be hymself to doe his owne woorkes in you: Whom otherwise
ye should but mocke and shoue, and spee vnto hym, so long as
ye pretende to giue thanks vnto hym for his good gifte: be-
ing not sure, whether it were his gifte, or some idle deuise and
imagination of your owne haimes. And therefore, there is no-
thyng so pernicious, nothyng so monstrous, nothyng so hea-
till, as to goe about to gouerne the Church of God, without
the warrant of Gods owne Woorde and Woorke, and there-
fore, saint Peter saue greate reason to adde this muche, that
he to teache how the Church ought to be gouerned.

12 Dearly beloved, thinke it not straunge concerning
the fire triall, which is among you to proue you, as
though some straunge thing were come vnto you.

Perit

Vpon the first Epistle



He againe be useth a phrase by forme of speech
 with our tongue is not acquainted. But
 Sainct Peter therefore useth it, to purce vs in
 minde of sundrie testes and places of the Scrip-
 tures, whiche many tymes tearmeth Per-
 secution and Affliction, by the name of a fierie Furnace. Af-
 ter whiche saynt Peter hymself, alsoe in the first Chap-
 ter of this his first Epistle hath these wordes: That the triall of
 your Faith beinge muche more precious then gold that pe-
 rissheth, (though it bee tried with fire) might bee sounde vn-
 to your praise, honour, and glorie at the appearyng of Iesus
 Christe. Likewise we read in the Prophete Esaie, Chap. xlvij.
 that the Lorde speaketh these wordes: Beholde I haue tried
 thee, in the furnace of affliction. And in the xxvj. Psalm. Tie
 me O Lorde, prooue and examine my reines and my harte.
 Againe Psal. lxxvj. Wee passed through fire and water. To bee
 short, it is an vsuall phrase in the Scripture, to call affliction,
 Fier: and triall of fire. And hereunto alludeth Saincte Peter,
 willing vs, not to thinke it straunge, or any thing vnmeet and
 vniexpediente for vs, though this fierie triall happen vnto vs,
 to prooue and trie vs, euen as golde is tried in the Fire.

For as soone as wee haue bowed our sincere Faith vnto
 God, and haue giuen our minnes to serue hym: God lingereth
 not long, neither maketh any delate, but presently withall,
 taketh his Crosse vpon vs, to trie and confirme vs in our pro-
 fession, and to make out Faith the more strong and effectual.
 The holie Gospell is a talke of wonderfull power, and there-
 fore can not shewe out his proper force and might other wise,
 then in Temptation and Affliction. And no manne is ever a-
 ble to declare or to knowe, what the mightie power and vertue
 thereof is, vntill he haue experimented and tasted the same in
 Tribulation. Wherefoer the Crosse and Affliction be,
 there namely doeth the glorious Gospell of GOD, bothe dis-
 plaie and exercise his force, might and vertue. It is the worde
 of life, and therefore can not declare out his mightie operation
 and power, other wise then in Death. And therefore where
 there

there is not a Death and affliction, there is no manne that can tell or trie, what the force and power thereof is, and how much stronger it is then either Sinne or Death. And therefore it is, that he saith [Whiche is kindled among you to proue you] that is to say: GOD neuer sendeth unto you any Affliction or fire, (that is, any Crosse or tribulation) to make a fierie triall of you, but he doeth it to proue, whether you will stick vnto hym, and depende vpon his holie Word and Providence, or no. In the x. Chapter of the Booke of Wisdom it is written of Iacob, that GOD gaue hym an hard conflict, to the intent he might by triall knowe, that the feare of God is stronger then all thynges. And this is the cause, why GOD laith the Crosse vpon all them that bee beleeuers, that they might taste and feele what the power and might of GOD is, whiche by faith they haue embraced.

- 13 But reioyce, in asmuch as ye are partakers of Christes sufferings,

Saint Peter doeth not here require that we should feele and sustaine the same afflictions of Christe, wherewith he hymself was persecuted, and so to be made partakers of his sufferings: but his meaning is this: Christe was afflicted and persecuted, and therefore thinke not you to escape scotfree without persecution. When ye are thus afflicted, ye partake with Christe. For if wee will liue with him, wee must dye also with him. If wee will raigne with him, wee must also suffer with him, as saint Paule saith Rom. vi. Col. ij. Ephe. iij. Hebr. xij. j. Cor. vij. ij. Tim. ij. and in many other places.

- 13 That when his glorie shall appeare, ye may be glad and reioyce.

Now ye fall into any such tribulation and Crosse, ye haue cause to reioyce. And this you must see, as he saith in the 50 psalme, then the comfort is in the bodie, it is

Vpon the first Epistle

See that ye a p're to eternall ioye. For this manner of ioye in afflictions hath his beginning here, but his continuance is everlasting. Whereas on the other side, hee that kicketh and repineth at the affliction whiche the Lorde sendeth unto hym, and is (as it were) displeased and angrie with GOD for the same, that person shall suffer double torture: that is, both here in this worlde, and perpetually in the worlde to come. Wee reade of certaine holie Parties, how they went to their torment, and suffered death with moste cheresfull and merie myndes: as of sainte Agatha, who shewed more ioye and alacritie when shee was haled and drawen into Prison, then if shee had gone to any ioyefull melodie and dauncyng. So also did the Apostles returne with ioye from the Counsell, pretyng earnest thanks to Almighty God, who had vouchsafed to make them worthy to suffer persecution for Christes cause, who now are in blisse and eternall ioye in Heauen.

13 When his glorie shall appeare.

White theweth not for the himselfe visible as Lorde, but as yet laboureth and is in traualle with vs. As concerning himselfe he is alreadie Lorde of all thynges, but wee that bee his members, are not as yet become so. But wee shall see so, when his domination and glorie shall be manifested and shine brighter then the Sunne.

14 If ye be rayled vpon for the Name of Christe, blessed are ye:

White is to the world an odious and hateful name: of whom when thou once beginnest to preache, thou must not thinke, but that that which on Earth be of highest calling and greatest countenance, will both blaspheme and speake euill of hym. And in this Age wherein wee now presently lue, this further mischief is growen, that they which be our persecuters, are those, which yett and name of

of Christians; and would deare vs in hande that thei bee the true professors of his name: whereas in their deeres that veter-ly denye, renounce, and persecute Christe: and yett (sooth) thei will bee called Christians, glorifying and vaunting themselves for that thei bee baptized. So that our case now is bothe more dangerous: and also more troublesome and grievous then others afore hath been. For is not that conflict and Battaille more then twice lamettable, wherein our Enemies and adversaries against whom wee fight, carie the same crosse, beate the same Standardes, and pretende to maintaine the same quarell that wee doe? And therefore if this comfort and consolation of saluice Peter were ever necessari for any people, truslie it is in these tymes moste exprobrant: and needfull for vs, that wee make constant stande in our profession; and cheerefully perseuere in maintenance of the truth against those that persecute withoute (I saie) which in the eye of the world are accompted the best and the wisest.

14. For the spirit of glorie; and of God resteth vpon you: which on their parte is still spoken of him on your parte: your parte is glorified.

Have among you (saith he) the Spirit; which is the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Glorie; that is to say: the Spirit which maketh vs glorious: but not here in this world; but in the better world when he glorie of Christe shall appeare and bee reueiled. Furthermore he is not onely the Spirit of Glorie; for that he maketh vs glorious, but also for that wee agnize and acknowledge hym to bee glorious; and attribute that honoure as peculiar vnto hym: as clearly beuincing that he will also glorie and dignifie vs, when as he hath already glorified & dignified Christe; and brought hym into the glorie of his Father. And therefore wee ought not so be aggraued or much vexed, although we be much shame-mened and accused, such this Spirit resteth vpon vs; whereby we maie bee sure, for that the name of Christe resteth vpon vs.

101 Vpon the first Epistle

For that Blasphemie rebovndeth vnto him, that is the Spirit
of Glorie, and not vnto vs: and he built in his good tyme her re-
uenged thereof, and will bying vs out of it into glorie. This is
a noble comfort that wee Christians haue, in that wee maie
saie: the worde whiche I preache, is none of myne owne, nei-
ther is any faith myne owne: that are all the wordes and the
giftes of God: for that reuileth and railleth on me, reuileth and
raileth on God according to Christs owne saying, Math. x.
He that receiveth you, receiveth mee, and he that despiseth
you, despiseth mee. Saint Peters wordes therefore are in
effect as though he should saie: Knowe ye that the Spirit
whiche ye haue, is of that power and might, that he can easilie
auenge himselfe of his enemies as the Lord himselfe Exodus xxiij.
promiseth: saying if thou wilt haue victory ouer my voyce, and do
all that I speake, I will bee an Enemy vnto thine Enemies.
And the Scripture in many places railleth the Enemies of
Gods people, the Enemies of GOD himselfe. And therefore
when wee are rayled on for none other cause, but for that wee
be Christians, and to help forward Christs teache bee assured,
as he said long agoe that God will be reuenged: it is not wee that are
rayled on, but the spight and railing properly rebovndeth vnto
God. And therefore (saith he) patiently abide it, and reioyce
in your iniquities, for that which is done vnto you is done vnto
the Spirit, whiche is the Spirit of God. And thus he pro-
ceedeth againe with good fruitfull exhortations, as he should
saie: hee do not beleeue that I am a man, but that I am a man of
the Spirit, and I will be reuenged of mine enemies.

15 But let none of you suffer as a Murtherer or as a
thiefe, or as an euill doer, or as a busie bodie in other
mens matters.

16 But if any man suffer as a Christian, let hym not be
ashamed, but let hym glorie in God in this behalf.

His meaning is this: Ye haue heard both how ye must
needes suffer affliction, and also in your affliction how
ye must beaue your selues: at which tyme, that ye
suffer not for your owne ill doings but for Christs sake. Ye haue
heard

heard also how in this our Age the case so standeth, that wee are compelled to suffer persecution vnder wicked bloodsuckers, who (not withstanding) beare the name of Christians. So that now a true follower and embracer of the truth of Christ, suffering for the sincere profession of Christ, is not thought to suffer persecution as a Christian, but is rather reputed and taken as an Enemy of Christ: for that they whiche be the persecutors, challenge to themselves the name and title of the true Christians: affirming as well as wee, that he is blessed and happy which dieth for Christ. In this case, none but the Spirit is able to discern who be the true, and who be the counterfeit and counterfeit Christians. And therefore thou must be firmly settled in faith, & thoroughly persuaded in soundnesse of conscience, that thou art before God a right Christian, and that thy heavenly Father doth so accept and take thee, whatsoeuer other will the World say of thee.

When ye are therefore afflicted as Christians, let none of you (saith saint Peter) bee ashamed, but rather let him glorifie God for the same. Wherein he sheweth that tribulations, afflictions and tormentes are thynges so precious, that wee ought to give God hartie thanks therefore, and to glorifie his holie name for so greace a dauntie: in that, of his especiall favour towards vs, of vnmortall he maketh vs worthe to suffer for the profession of his name. But alas, this beauring of the Crosse nowadaies in many places is thought in a manner worthe to consist in a wastage carrying aboute of a materall Crosse, after a holie ceremonious solemnitie, whiche doth a man as muche good as Salte cast into his eyes. It is not the Crosse of Christ that man saue mee: I ought to beleue it: but to beare myne vnder it. It cometh to thine hartie captiue and thank you for his affliction, thou hast obtained and arte possessed of a true trier of a true. The boanes of S. Peter bee holie, but what good gette I by that? Thou must be sure that thou thy self and thy boanes maye attaine to bee holie, which thing thou art sure of, when thou art afflicted and sufferest persecution for Christ.

Vpon the first Epistle

17 For the time is come, that iudgment must beginne at the house of God. If it first begin: vs, what shall the ende be of them which obey not the Gospell of God?



He bringeth in two places of the Prophet's at once, tending both to this purpose. The first is in the xxv. of Ieremie, saying thus. Beholde, I beginne to plague the citie, where my name is called vpon: I will first chastise and punishe my best beloued and dearest chyldren, thei must first haue some stryall and experience of this fier of tribulation, wherein the iust are proued & tried: And shall ye that are myne enemies (saith Ieremie) goe free? Ye shall not goe free. And againe, Cap. xlix. Behold, thei whose iudgment was not to drinke of the Cuppe, haue assuredly drunken: and art thou he, that shalt goe free? Thou shalt not goe free: but thou shalt surely drinke of it: that is to saie: I strike and punish those whom I dearly loue, to the intent thou shouldest see, what I meane to dooe to them that be myne enemies. The meaning of whiche wordes are worthy of diligent consideration. The holler and godlier chyldren that God hath in this worlde, the more ignominiously and cruellie he suffereth them to be dealt withall and massacred in the worlde. What then maie the rest looke for?

The other place is out of the ix. of Ezechiel. The Prophet there saue certeine armed men, carrying tooles and weapons of destruction in their hands, who were commaunded to smite all that were in the Citie, young and olde, men, women and chyldren, that were not marked in their foreheades with TAY. And vnto them, GOD there further saith. Beginne ye as my Sanctuarie. As soone as euer the Gospell is preached, God be-gynneth to punishe so iune, that he maie worke kill and quicken againe, but he willeth to beate the godly to their no harme, but as it were with a foretable (as the common Proverbe saith) and with a fewe twiggess after a motherly affection. What shall wee thinke then, will he dooe to those that doe not beleeue?

believe? As though he should saie: if he deale so roughly and so severely with his welbeloued choyen, wee may easily gesse, what the tormentes shall be that tarte for the unbelieuers.

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the vngodly and the sinner appeare?



His place is taken out of the xj. of the Prouerbes. Behold, the righteous shall receiue punishment in the earth: how muche more then the wicked and the synner? If the godlie bee beaten, where shall the wicked remaine. The verie same here rejoyceth Saint Peter, sayng: The iuste shall scarce bee saved. Yet iuste whiche stedfastly beleueth, but no manne persisterh and perseuereth in faide. without greate labour, trouble, and sweate: he must passe many dikes, taste of many a sharpe brunte and calamitie, and go through the fire of many tribulations. Where then shall there bee any place for hym that beleueth not? When as faithe is so violently and forwylly assailed and shaken, that it euen trembleth and quaketh, how can he stande that is bolde of faithe? And therefore he concludeth.

19 Wherefore lett them that suffer accordyng to the will of God, committe their soules to hym in well doying, as vnto a faithfull Creator,



Hei vnto whom God sendeth affliction, being vn- sought for, undesired, and vnpocured by them- selues, lett them committe their Soules vnto hym that is their Creatour. Thei still continue in well hooping, thei perseuere and goe forwarde in good woorkes, thei thinke not backe for afflictions, but committe and com- mende their Soules to hym that created them, and is faithe- full: In whiche woorde is contained moste plentifull store of heavenly consolation. For, seeing that God hath created thy Soule without any care, labour, or helpe of thee, when as thou

Vpon the first Epistle

was not as yet any thing, shall not be also easily profane any
same it: And therefore committe it onely to hym, but yet so,
that thou muste not thinke thy self exempted and privileged
from good Works: for thou must not thinke that thou must
bye idle: thou must stryue and endeavour thy self to accomplysh,
and be eche waie answerable to the name of a Christian: wit-
nessing thy Faith by thy good Works. But if thou live
here carelesly and recklesly, thou shalt in the ende
(doubtlesse) finde that thou haste soulie decei-
ued thy self. This is the laste admoniti-

on of sainte Peter vnto them that
must suffer affliction for the
will of GOD.



The



The fifth Chapter.



He Elders which are among you,
I beseeche whiche am also an Elder,
and a witnesse of the suffrynges of Christe,
and also a partaker of the glorie that shalbe reueiled.
2 Feede the flocke of GOD,
whiche dependeth vpon you,
caryng for it not by constraint, but
willingly; not for filthy lucre, but

of a ready mynde.

3 Not as though ye were Lordes ouer Gods heritage, but
that ye maie bee ensamples to the flocke.

4 And when the chief shepheard shall appeare, ye shall
receiue an incorruptible crowne of glorie.

5 Likewise ye yonger, submit your selues vnto the Elders,
and submitte your selues euery man, one to an other: decke
your selues inwardly in lowlinesse of mynde; for GOD resisteth
the proude, and giueth grace to the humble.

6 Humble your selues therefore vnder the mightie hande
of God, that he maie exalt you in due tyme.

7 Cast all your care on hym: for he careth for you.

8 Bee sober and watche: for your aduersarie the Deuill as a
roaryng Lion walketh aboute, seekyng whom he maie deuoure:

9 Whom resist stedfast in the Faith, knowing that the
same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren, whiche
are in the worlde.

10 And the GOD of all grace, whiche hath called vs vnto

Dd.j. his

Vpon the first Epistle

his eternall glorie by Christe Iesus, after that ye haue suffered a litle, make you perfect, confirme, strengthen and stablish you,

11 To hym bee glorie and dominion for euer and euer, Amen.

12 By Syluanus a faithfull brother vnto you, as I suppose, haue I written briefly, exhortyng & testifyyng, how that this is the true grace of God, wherein ye stande.

13 The Churche that is at Babylon elected together with you, saluteth you, and Marcus my sonne.

14 Greete ye one an other with the kisse of Loue. Peace be with you all, which are in Christ Iesus, Amen.



In The Elders which are among you I beseech, which
 I am also an Elder, and a witness of the sufferings of
 Christ,



Here Saint Peter teacheth those that have any
 charge of keeping the flocke of Christe, how
 they ought to behaue themselves. In the Chapter
 afore, he tolde, that none should presume
 to teache or preache any thing, vntill he were
 certaine and assured that the same was the sincere and pure
 Word of GOD, vpon whiche as vpon a firme and strong
 Rocke, our Consciences may boldly stae. For this in dutie
 is required of vs Christians, that wee should bee certaine and
 knowe thoroughly what thing is allowed of Christe, and what
 is not: for they that wauer in vncertainty of this knowledge,
 are not to bee taken as Christians. He addeth also thus much,
 that whosoever entred into any office or function, should so be-
 haue himself therein in the respect, as that he should not doubt
 but that God was the Authour thereof. But what he here saith,
 peculierly belongeth to Bishops and Ecclesiasticall Pastors,
 wherein he teacheth them how they are to demean themselves
 in the administration of their auctorities and charges, and
 what manner of persons they ought to bee.

Wee must here further be acquainted with the phrase and
 propriety of the tongue, wherein this Epistle was written,
 that wee bee not deceiued through ignorance of the significa-
 tion and force of the Word. For this Greeke name *episkopos*,
 which S. Peter here useth, doeth signifie An Elder,
 by whiche worde they also are called that bee Seniors; that
 is, beinge ceasing in age, grauitie, vertue, wisdom, and ex-
 perience. After the same sort, doeth Christ call his Disciples,
 Ministers, and Senate, to whose office it belongeth to swerke
 and gouerne his Spirituall Empire (that is, to preache and to
 take care of the Christian Congregation) by the name of El-
 ders. And therefore meane not awis, neither let it anything
 moue thee, though they which bee Elders, be sometimes called

Do, is,

by

Vpon the first Epistle

by other Titles or names, whereof the Scripture maketh no mention at all. But not respectyng the order, where in thinges presently stande, weigh and conceiue the mater thus: When S. Peter or any other of the Apostles, came into any Citie wherein Chyistians were, they ordeined some one or other of theim, suche as liued honestly and vnblanderly, and had wife and chyldren; and also skilfull in the Scriptures of GOD, to haue the superintendencie and charge ouer the rest. And then they called Seniors or Elders, whom after ward bothe sainte Peter and also sainte Paule called Bishopps, whereby wee maie note, that Bishopps were none others, then the verie same, that were Elders.

Touchyng this purpose, wee reade in the hystorie of sainte Martine, how a certayne man came vnto a place in Aphyca, and there in a poore Cottage found an elderly man, whom they thought to haue been some plaine Countreiman. Within a while, they saue many people come flockyng to hym, to whome he preached and expounded the Woorde of God, whereby they perceiued that he was their Pastour or Bishop. For in those daies, there was no difference either in apparaille, or maners betweene the Bishopps, and the residue of Chyistians.

The Elders (saith S. Peter) vpon whom the charge lieth, to feede the flocke of Christ with the Woorde of GOD, and to haue care ouer them in the Loyde, I exhort, whiche are also an Elder. Whereby it manifestly appeareth, that they whom he here nameth Elders, were suche as laboured in the ministerie of the Woorde, and diligently preached the glad tynges of the Gospell. For, suche as he was that calleth hymself their fellowe Elder, suche also appeareth it that they were. And here we see; how farre he humbleth and abaseth hymself, in that he taketh not vpon hym the name of a Prelate, (which in respect that he was an Apostle of the Loyde he might haue doen) but calleth hymself a Fellowe Elder, and also a witnesse of the suffrynges of Christe. As if he had said: I doe not onely preache, but I am also among those Confessours of Christ, that are exercised in daierly afflictions. And withall he also sheweth

with that so many as bee Christians, must bee persecuted and suffer affliction. And this is a true Apostle of Christe, unto whom if the Pope and his Bishoppes were any thing like, (as they are shamelesse enough, to chalenge to themselves the same title) we would not greatly stick, willingly to kisse their feete.

I. And also a partaker of the glory that shalbe reuiciled.

This parte of the Apostles Style and Title, is of farre more excellencie, then any that our Popes Bishoppes dare pretende to ble. For thereby doeth Saint Peter take and reckon hymself holie, and a blessed Manne. And although he perfectly knewe, that he should be a partaker of the glorie to come, yet taketh he no pride therein, he listeth not hymself up in any swelling glorie, but modestly containeth hymself within the boundes of temperate softnes and curtesie.

2. Feede the flocke of God, which dependeth vpon you, caryng for it, not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy lucre, but of a readie minde.



Christ is the first and chiefeſt Paſtoure, who hath many Paſtours vnder hym: as he alſo hath many flockes: whom beeyng diſperſed in ſundry quarters of the worlde, he committeth to the charge and ouerſight of their Shepheardes and Paſtours, as in this Epiſtle of S. Peter, written into diuers Countreys and Regions appeareth. But what is the charge of theſe Paſtors to do? For ſooth, to feede the flocke of Chriſt. This worde (Feede) the Pope hath raked and haled vnto hym ſelf, whereby he goeth aboute to proue hymſelf Lord and Prince of all, and that it is in his owne choiſe and auctoritie, to deale with the Sheepe as he liſteth hymſelf. But alas, who is ſo ignorant that knoweth not, what this worde (Feede) meaneth: To witte, that the Paſtours and Shepheardes ought to prouide Paſture for their Sheepe, and to ſee therein

Do. liij.

haue

Vpon the first Epistle

hate their meate in convenient time and due season, whereby they maie growe to be fruitful: And moreover to watche that devouring Wolves runne not in among them; and reare the Flocke in peeces? This word (Feed) signifieth nothing lesse then to kill and spoile.

Furthermore **S.** Peter calleth it peculiarie the Flocke of Christ, as though he shoulde saie: Think not that the Flocke is any of your owne, ye are but onely Seruauntes and Ministers to looke vnto it, ye are no Lordes nor Masters ouer it. Contrarie to the bold practise and customable dealing of many Bishops, whiche account and call euery one within their Diocesse and iurisdiction, their Sheepe. We are the Sheepe of Christe, for he saied afore, Ye are now returned vnto the Sheeheard and Bishoppe of your Soules. Bishops are the Ministers of Christe, to keepe his Sheepe, and to giue them meate and pasture. And therefore to feede, is nothing els then to preach the Gospell, wherewith their Soules may be fedde, sated and fructified, that so the Sheepe maie be nourished with the Gospell. This is the onely and proper office of a Bishoppe.

So saied Christ vnto Peter: Feede my Sheepe, Ioh. xxj. that is, the Sheepe whiche I committe vnto thee to feede, are not thine, but myne. Whoeuere these wordes haue been so canuassed and wrested by my Lorde the Pope, that he thereby vsurpeth and exerciseth an eternall domination and Lordship ouer the Church of Christe, whereas neither he, nor any of his sacrilegiouse Chaplains, preached so muche as one worde of the Gospell. Thei bragge that thei haue their succession frō **S.** Peter. If it were so, yet feare I, that it could scarcely be proued that any Pope euer preached the Gospell: For none of them hath left any thing behinde hym, that is written and extant, wherein a man maie read the Gospell. Sanct Gregorie the Pope was surely an holie man: and yet the thinges which he preached, are not to be esteemed worth a strawe: wherby it may appeare, that the same See of Rome is peculiarly and specially accursed of God. I denie not, but sundrie of the Popes suffred Persecution vnder cruel Tyrantes, for the Gospels

ake,

sake, but yet there is nothing extant that was written by any of them, whiche is Euangelicall. And yet thei still bragge and crake, that it is their charge to feede, whereas in deede thei doe nothing els but entangle, and clogge mennes consciences with Lawes of their owne, and make hauocke and sale of mennes Soules, neuer troublingng themselves with preaching one woorde of Christe his sacred Gospell.

True it is, that there are many to bee founde, as well women as men, whiche are able to preach, and that with no lesse dexteritie and sufficiencie, then he unto whom that charge and office is peculiarly committed. But because the greatest number in the flocke alwaies is of weakelynges, therefore it is expedient that some bee appointed to strengthen and confirme suche, and to keepe backe the Wolfe from rushing in among them and deuouring them. For a Preachers office and duetie is not onely to feede, that is, to teache his Sheepe, how thei ought to frame themselves to become true and sincere Christians: but he hath the charge also to looke that the Wolfe bee kept out, and that none of the Sheepe be deuoured, or seduced by false doctrine, and so drawen into errour, whiche is the continuall vyse and practise of the Deuill. Now, there bee many that can well enough abide to haue the Gospell preached, so that there might bee no exclaimyng, and speaking against the Wofles: I meane, so that Preachers, in their Sermons, would forbear rasyng and rauncyng against Prelates. But although I preach sounde doctrine, and that whiche is true: and although I feede and teach (my charge) the Sheepe, well and rightly: yet is not that sufficient: for it is further required at my handes to keepe the Sheepe from daunger, and to haue a carefull regarde vnto thein, that Wolves come not among them, to dysturbe them awaie out of their fertile and wholesome pastures. For, to what purpose is my building, if when I haue conched and overylaid my Stones, an other straightwaies come & hurle them downe as fast againe, and I leping him, forbide him not? The Wolfe is well enough contriued, that the Sheepe bee well fedde, and fattened in good pasture: because the

fatter

Vpon the first Epistle

fatter thei bee, thei pleasaunter and daintier maie thinke they to make of them. But that Dogges should incessantly barke and haule at hym, that can be not abide. And therefore it is a matter of no small waight and charge, to feede well, according as GOD hath giuen in commaundement to doe: and it behooueth eche one in that function carefully to consider his charge in this behalfe.

The Flocke (saith he) whiche dependeth vpon you, that is, ouer whiche ye haue charge, or whiche is among you, and not whiche is subiect and liying at your feete. Care for it, and that not by constraint because ye can none otherwise choose, but willingly: not for filthie lucre sake, but of a readie mynd. Here he comprehendeth in one worde, all that whiche the Prophet Ezechiell in the xxxiiij. Chapter of his Prophecie, writeth concerning Pastors or Bishoppes. The meaning of this place is thus: Not onely feede ye, but take ye care also and provide for them, that they want nothing, and where any standeth in necessitie or neede, there see that ye relieue them: and in eche respect, doe the partes and duties of right ^{ENGLISH} ENGLISHMEN, that is, good Watchmen and faithfull Espialles. Looke out, least daunger appeare, stande alwaies yreste and readie on your garde, and diligently beholde and espie out of your Watchtower, what it is that is wantyng, or what it is that is befallen vnto every one within your charges. Whereby wee maie well perceiue and knowe, that a Bishoppe is euen the same that is here meant by an Elder. And therefore it is not true, whiche some saie, that a Bishoppicke is a dignitie, and a Bishop onely he that weareth a forked Mitre. Episcopacie is not a name of Dignitie, but of Office: for he that is inuested with that name and title, ought to looke to his Flocke & to be careful for it, and to serue as a good Watchman, to see abroade & learne what thinges be amisse any where within his charge. As if there be any that is weake, hauing his conscience wounded, hym ought he to confirme, comforte and heale: if any fall, him ought he to lift vp againe, and so as other defectes arise, to bee readie to helpe, whereby Christian people maie bee sufficiently

ciently looked vnto and provided for, bothe in Soule and in Bodie. This is the reason that hath moued mee heretofore oftentimes to saie, that if wee would institute a right Christian Common wealth, it were necessarie, that in every Citie there should bee thre or fouer Superintendentes, to take care and regarde ouer the Church and Congregation, and to refoyme and restore whatsoeuer therein is amisse or wantyng.

And here he toucheth two speciall popntes, ynough almost to terrifie and discourage any man from bearyng authoritie ouer the people, or to take this greate charge and burden vpon hym. For, first there bee some vertuous and honest men, who half vnwillinglie are drawn into the Ministerie and function of Preaching: for that, thei see it to be a painfull and laborious office, to skouce aboute euery where, to see how the Sheepe liue, to succour and helpe them that bee in want, to strengthen and raise by them that bee wauerpng and readie to fall: and finally to haue suche diligent care and continuall watche ouer them, that the Wolfe finde no entraunce to inuade and come rushyng in among them: yea in that, he must not sticke to laie downe his life for their preservation and safegarde. And also for that it is suche an harde matter & of so great difficultie, trulie to discharge the office of a godly Pastor: yea of so greate haunger also, because it must be thoughtly executed, & that not vnwillingly, or as though it were, by constraint. True it is, that no man oughte to intrude himself into that Office: but if he be herewnto called and required, he ought willingly to take it vpon hym, and to discharge and performe as muche as to his function and office appertaineth.

For thei that take this matter vpon the vpon necessitie and constraint, and haue neither courage nor pleasure in the same, shall neuer with any profite fruitfully discharge or execute their office.

Againe, there bee others worse then these, which take this Office vpon them for none other ende, but for filthy Lucre, to scrape and rake together wealth, and to pamper and cramme their bellies. These fellows seeke onely for the Mool and

Ec. 1. the

Vpon the first Epistle

the **Hylke** of the **Sheepe**, but as for good pastures for them thei care not: and with this scabbe is the Popishe Clergie horrible infected. And this is a moste hurtfull, daungerous, noysome and filthie Vice, then whiche there can not bee any so dishonorable or shameful for him that taketh on him the name and charge of a Chyristian Bisshoppe or Pastor. Whiche was the thing that caused both the Apostles, Peter and Paule, and also the Prophetes so oft to recorde and inculke it. This caused Moses to saie, Num. xvj. I haue not taken so muche as an Assle from them: neither haue I hurt any of them. And Samuell also: Ye know that I haue not taken any mans Oxe, or Assle from hym, nor doen wrong to any &c. j. Sam. xij. For if he that hath this charge and function of feeding the flocke, be greedily giuen to scraping together of richesse and wealth, and to gape after filthie Lucre: suche a one (I saie) is hymself easilie and soone chaunged from a Pastor into a Wolfe.

2 But of a readie mynde:



What is, even with pleasure. Let the Pastor or Bisshoppe applie his Office and vocatiō, and that with a readie willingnes. Thei that thus cherefully, pryncipally, and zealously discharge their function, are those, which as thei dooe their dueties willingly, so dooe thei not greedily pull the fleece from the **Sheepe**. There bee therefore twoo sortes of false Pastors. The one sorte occupie their roume grudgingly and unwillingly: the other willingly and gladlie: but yet for gaîne and filthie lucre.

3 Nor as though ye were Lords of Gods heritage,



These are thei that are willing to take the office vpon them, for dignitie sake, because thei would liue pompouslie and beare greate swaie and authoritie in the **World**. He therefore exhorteth Bisshoppes, Cloers & Pastors, that thei practise

else not any Lordly tyrannie ouer the Flocke, as though the
 people were their Slaues and Underlings, or as though they
 had suche authoritie and Lordshippe ouer them, to commaund
 what they list. For wee haue but one Lord whiche is Christe,
 and he it is whiche gouerneth our Soules. Elders and Pa-
 stors haue no further charge thē to saide. And here in one woꝝd
 Saincte Peter utterly ouerthroweth all the kingdome of the
 Pope: and concludeth that no Bishoppe hath any authoritie,
 somuche as in one woꝝd to clogge and tye the consciences of
 the faithfull to the obseruation of their preceptes. For they
 themselves ought to bee Seruautes and Ministers, and to
 saie: Thus saierh the Lord, and these be the Wordes of Christ:
 it is not wee, the woꝝdes are none of ours: and therefore ye
 ought to doe that whiche is here commaunded. Accordyng to
 that whiche Christe saierh: Luc. xxij. The Kynges of the Gen-
 tiles reigne ouer them, and they that beare rule ouer them,
 are called gracious Lordes, but ye shall not bee so. Contrary
 whereunto the Pope boasteth and braggeth, sayng. Wee
 ought to bee Lordes, and to vs onely it belongeth to exercise
 chief rule and supꝛeme authoritie.

- 3 But that ye maie bee ensamples to the Flocke.
- 4 And when the chiefe Shepeheard shall appeare, ye
 shall receiue an incorruptible crowne of glorie.



That ye bee the foremost in the battaile, vsyng
 suche honest conuersation, that your life maie bee a
 Lanterne to giue light, and an example to the peo-
 ple, to imitate you. But our Lordly Shauelynges
 vse to tel the people an other tale, bidding them to doe this and
 that, thei themselves in the meane while leanyng on their soft
 Cushions, and takyng their ease like Lordynges: layng vpon
 vs grente and greuous burdens, whiche thei themselves will
 not touche nor lift at with one of their fingers: not trauaillyng
 any whit in preachyng the true Worde of God, but rather in
 commaundyng others to doe that, whiche thei themselves ne-

Vpon the first Epistle

met did, nor euer ment to dooe. And yet must no man tell them therof, for if he doe, he should be sure quickly to feele the smart of it.

Againe, to suche Pastors, Bishoppes, Elders and Superintendentes, as here in this worlde did their duties faithfully, truly, sincerely and holily, Saincte Peter assigneth no temporall rewardes: As though he should saie: Your Office and function is of moze excellencie and dignitie, then that in this life it can bee requited and recompenced: there is but one kept for you an euerlastyng Crowne, that shall bee giuen vnto you whiche faithfully and diligently feede the flocke of Christe. And this is the Exhortation, where with S. Peter encourageth them, to whom the charge and cure of Soules is committed. Whereby is manifestly concluded and proued, that the Pope with his Cardinallles and Bishoppes is the very Antichrist, and the professed aduersaries of Christe, for that they dooe nothing of all these, whiche Saincte Peter here requireth. For thei neither teache others, neither doe thei any thyng themselves, but are wholely and altogether busied in those deuises, and hymatters, whiche are most opposite and contrarie therunto. Thei neither feede the Sheepe themselves, neither will they suffer others to feede them: but rather plaie the rauenynge Wolues, deuourynge and murderynge the flocke, and yet bragge thei that thei bee Christes Vicars on Earth. Too true ite (the moze pittie) are thei in the rouse and steade of Christe beyng absent: after the maner and example of the Deuill? For where soeuer Christ is not in place, there thei beare swaie, and as Butcherlie Tyrantes raigne and commaunde most imperioullie.

It is therefore verie expedient and requisite, that the Latite and simpler sort should perfectly remember this and suche like places: by the whiche thei maie be able to answere againe: that Antichristian Kynngdome of the Pope, when soeuer thei shalbe called into question and examination as touchyng their Faith: yea, thus maie thei well saie, when thei are brought into suche pinches: Behold, Christe saith thus: and the Pope saith

saith the cleane contrary: Christ saith yea, the Pope saith naye. Thei therefore thus teaching contrarie and repugnant doctrines, the one of them must needs lye. Now, that Christ should lye, it is impossible, and theretoze it is the Pope, that is the lying Ruffian of the woꝛlde, and not onely a Drullishe Lye, but euen Antichrist himself. Thus oughtest thou to bee furnished and armed with the Scriptures, by the whiche thou maiest not onely holdlie call the Pope, Antichriste, but maiest also (when thou hast so doen) must plainly and easly prove it, so that thou maiest surely by the woꝛde of God persill in thine opinion, euen to the death, against the Drull and all his infernall Arme.

5 Likewise ye younger, submit your selues vnto the Elders.



Here are his laste admonitions of this Epistle. This order requireth S. Peter in the Church of Christ, that the younger shold be duetifull and obersaunt to their Elders, and that in the whole course of their life the Inferiours shewe submission towarde their Betters. Which if it were no in aduise obserued and put in hys, we should not neede so many Lawes. For he requireth of the Younger sorte, their obdience toward their Elders, and willpugnre to be gouerned, by the directiō of their wisdomes: For that, thei best knowe what is moste pleasyng to God, and what shall moste redounde to their commendations and praisses. But he speaketh here of suche Elders as are learned in the holie Ghoste, and are godlie experienced. For if they themselves bee not endued with godlie wisdom, but bee sortishe and foolish, it is not so to be thought, that thei can any waie well gouerne others. But of suche as be discrete and wise, it is most expedient and conuenient, the Youthe should be gouerned. And sainte Peter here speaketh not of the ciuile administration and gouernement of the Commonwealth, but he speaketh generally: namely, that thei which be

Ec. ii.

Elders,

Vpon the first Epistle

Elders, either in yeares or by office, or any waile els, should traine by and gouerne the Younger sort in their dutie, and in matters of the Spirit.

5 And submitte your selues euery man, one to another: decke your selues inwardlie in lowlinesse of mynde:



He be somewhat tempereth and qualificth his woordes spoken afoze, requirpng that euery one should submitt themselves one to another. But how can this well agree, that all men should submit themselves one to another, if the superiortie and gouernement bee to bee giuen (as was afoze saied) vnto them that bee of the Elder sorte? Some will saie, that Peter in that former sentence spake of Elders, and here in this place onely of the Younger sorte, who ought to submitt themselves first to their Elders, and next one to another. But wee will take these woordes as spoken in a generalitie, euen as that sentence of S. Paule Roma. xij. In giuyng of honour, one goyng before another. For I take that place, as I also doe this present sentence of S. Peter, to haue reference to all maner of persones indifferently, and without respecte. The Younger ought to be obedient, & submissiue vnto the Elder: but yet so, that the Elder maie not thinke themselves to bee Lordes ouer thein, but be readie and willpng to submitt themselves also, and be directed by them that bee Younger, if any of thein bee endued with deeper vnderstandpng, or profounder skill then thei haue. Euen as in the old Testament, the Lord oftentimes aduanced Younger men, to beare chief office and principallitie, where he sawe thein to excell the Elder in wisdom and foresight. The same lesson teacheth Christ, Luc. xliij. When thou art bidden to a feast, sette not thy self doune in the chiefest place, least a more honourable man then thou be hidden, and then he that badde both the hym and thee, come and saie to thee: Giue this man rounge, and thou then begin with

with shame to take the lowest roume. But when thou art bidden, goe sitte doune in the lowest roume, &c. Whiche parable he concludeth thus: For he that exalteth himself, shalbe brought lowe, & he that humbleth himself, shalbee exalted. Therefore truly the Younger ought to submit themselves, and bee in subiection vnto the Elder: and yet neuertheless, the Elder ought againe for their partes, to bee so modestly minded that eche of them thinke hymself in his harte the lowest. If we could thus dooe, the worlde would bee in a mercurious quiete staie and tranquillitie. And this (saith he) we ought to applie our selues vnto, that wee make thereby the two fourth the lowliness of mynde, that is explained and ressaunt with vs.

5 For God resisteth the proude; and giueth grace to the humble.

Them that bee so lastie mynded, that they will not peeble and roupe, God hymself coolereth and directeth: and contrariwise, exalteth and aduanceth those which humble and thowre doune themselves. This is a common beaten saying in euery mannes mouth, but would God it were as well vsed and putte in vye in life, as it is often and almost euery where still talked and pronounced with tongue.

6 Humble your selves therefore vnder the mightie hande of God.



Disastruche as God so requirith, that ye should submit your selues one to an other, see that ye doe it willingly, and so he will exalte you: but if ye doe it unwillingly, yet shall ye doe it, because he will abate your pride, and chide you downe.

6 That he may exalte you in due tyme. **Think**

Vpon the first Epistle

Thinke ye not that he will tarle long, but stedfastly trust
ye in hym: for ye haue his sure promise, that this is the
hande of GOD, and his blessed will: and though in the
iudgement of flesh, the tyme seeme some what long, yet neuer
haue ye any respect to the tyme, but committe your selues to
be protected and gouerned by the mightie hand of God, which
moſte assuredly in the ende will exalt you.

7 Caste all your care on hym: for he careth for you.

Hauē those promises, by the whiche ye maie rest
in moſte perfecte assurance, that God will neuer
forſake you, but ſtill take care for you: and there-
fore abandon any caſte a waie your owne careful-
neſſe, and lette the Lorde alone deale for you. Suffer hym to
take the entier charge and care, bothe of you and yours. Theſe
be moſte comfortable and ſweete wordes, and to a Chriſtian
Conſiderer moſte chearfull and auiſable. And why ſereth he ſo
many, and ſuche horrible pꝛouocations and reaſons to per-
ſuade Punithment? Cruelly, becauſe the nature of man is ſo
ſliffe and ſo ſlowe, that no man almoſte willinglie will abate
himſelfe by himſelf, or renounce his owne ſenſuall pleaſures.
And therefore here he ſheweth vs, how he careth for
vs, and how he careth for vs, and how he careth for vs, and how he
careth for vs, and how he careth for vs, and how he careth for vs.
And therefore here he ſheweth vs, how he careth for vs, and how he
careth for vs, and how he careth for vs, and how he careth for vs.

8 Bee ſober and watche for your aduerſarie the De-
uill, as a roaring Lyon, who walketh aboute, ſeeking
to deuoure ſome of vs. He beareth the ſemblance of a Lyon,
and a roaring Lyon, who walketh aboute, ſeeking to deuoure
some of vs.

He admoniſheth vs to looke to our ſelues, and gird
about to open our eyes, that wee ſlumber not in ſlouthe
or giue our ſelues to ſlumber, nor regarding how
nere we be to daunger and perill. And here wee maie behold
what this life is, and how this wortheie Apoſtle hath
depaigned

depainted and set out the same vnto vs: insomuche that there is none, hauing his Conscience touched with any feare of God, but continually wisheth to bee dissolved and to exchange it for that other. For here we bee in the kingdome of the Deuill and Sathan. And as a trauailer or Straunger that commeth into an Inne, where he knoweth there are none but Thieues and Murtherers, will looke well to himself, and bee very careful for his owne safetie before he will enter into that house: (if the case so bee that needes he must goe in) and will be sure (as neere as he can) to arme his bodie from the violence of their furies, and will not sleepe muche in that house, but stande vpon his guard, that he maie departe thence without harme: Euen so and with like daunger lue we here on Earth, where Sathan beareth the swaie and is Prince, who hath so the hartes of men within the daunger of his power, that by them he byngeth to passe whatsoeuer he listeth: It is a terrible matter to thinke thereon, and therefore S. Peter herein giueth vs a watchworde to be ware, and admonisheth vs to be careful and diligent in looking to our selues: saying: Be ye sober. For they that be giuen to drunkennes and surphetting, and as Swine, care for nothyng but for their bellie, are fitte for nothyng that good is. And therefore wee must endeavour our selues to haue alwaies in readinesse our Armoz of Sobrietie.

And Wathe ye (saith he) and that not onely spirituallie but also corporallie. For a heauie, lumpy and drowsie body, when it hath pampered, crammied and ingurged it self with meates and drinks, is not fit nor able to resist the Deuill: seing it is hard enough for them so to doe, which are strong in faith, and haue plentifull giftes of the Spirite.

But what is the cause why wee should so muche giue our selues to Sobrietie, and watchfulnesse? Because (saith he) your aduersarie the Deuill skuddeth about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he maie deuour. For the Deuill neuer sleepe, he is thouroughly emured and furnished with guile, craftie and malice, and cariech that can carde stomack against vs: that he leaueth no waie vntempted how he maie molest and en-

Vpon the first Epistle

snare vs, yea he well knoweth whiche waie to laie his baytes to catch vs & bypng vs vnto his lure, and therfore he roamerly and trudgeth by and drowne, like a roaring and rampyng Lyon, that pellereth and roareth hideouslie and horribly, as though he would deuoure all that comineth in his waie. And therfore hath saint Peter left vnto vs in wrytyng this so necessarile and profitable an admonition: wherein he discouereth vnto vs our deadly and infernall Enemie, that wee should take heede of hym, and with S. Paule not bee ignorant of his malicious dyctes. For, in that he skuddeth and walketh about, his dyct and meaning is thereby to bypng vs into a negligence and securitie: wherein if he maie once lulle vs, there straightwaies issue and budde out from thence Anger, Wrath, Contention, Arrogance, Shamelesnesse, contempt of God, and all other mischieues whatsoener.

And here note, how he saith that the Deuill walketh about. He setteth not vpon thee directly befoze thy face, where he knoweth thou art fenced and garded: but he cowardly lyeth in waite to surprize thee behinde at thy backe, or allope on the one side: he pryeth and tooteth within thee and without thee very diligently to espie thee at some vantage, where he maie set vppon thee. For when he hath attempted thee one waie (if he speede not of his purpose) he straightwaies taketh an other in hande. If he misse his purpose on this side of thee, he flingeth to the other, omitting no subtle deuill, no craftie ambush, no cunnyng pollicie to catche thee in a tripp and so to possesse thee. If he finde thee strongly armed and fenced on one parte, he planteth his batterie to an other side: if he bee disappointed there, he chargeth vpon thee (and that with incredible speede) in an other place, he neuer ceaseth, but is in continuall practise of mischiefe, for thy ouerthrowe and confusion: he neuer taketh any pause or staie, but still runneth about, not suffryng thee to haue any manner of rest, or intermission. And yet wee as men senselesse and carelesse make no reckonyng of this geare, neither watche wee to withstande hym, whereby he maie easilie and without resistance assaile and ouerthrowe vs. Let every one

one therefore looke diligently and warily to hymself: and he shall finde all this to be most true: as they that haue been tempted, can not bee ignoraunt. And therefore wee are moche then twise miserable, that liue here so carelessly and retchlessly. For if we would enter into consideration with our selues of this our life present, we should see good cause for vs to crye out and call for help, none otherwise then if wee were beset with a number of murderours Cheques. This caused Iob to saie, that the life of man on Earth is a mere Warfare, and a continuall temptation of sight. But why then (will ye saie) doth God place vs in this life beeping so full of miseries? Truly for this cause, that our Faith maie be exercised, and increased, and that we should be the gladder and willinger to departe hence: and further that Death might become moze sauourie unto vs; and bee the earnestlier of vs desired.

9 Whom resist, stand fast in the Faith,



We must bee sober and watche, but yet to this ende, that our bodies maie bee fit and ready for the conflict and battaile: and yet this is not sufficient, to ouercome the Deuill withall. These weapons are onely auailable for this respect, that the bodie maie bee the lesse occasioned to sinne. But the true weapon, wherewith wee must giue the ouerthrow to our foele to our Enemy, is Faith. For if wee take sure holde of GOD in his Worde, and in harte constantly cleaue thereunto by Faith, the Deuill shall neuer bee able to vanquish vs, but like a damned Cowarde straightwaies runne out of the fielde. If thou canst saie: This hath my Lord my God spoken, this I do stedfastly beleue, hereupon I raise my selfe, hereunto doe I leane; thou shalt see the Deuill quickly like a Sicker sneake awaye and departe: with whom all beautye, all ill conceytement and suite, all wrath, all couetousnesse, all fained hartednesse and desperation vanishe and yacke awaye also. But such is the subtiltie and craft of the Deuill, that he will

flie,

hardlie

Vpon the first Epistle

hardlie suffer thee to come to that poynt, but will vse all the meanes that hee can, to plucke this weapon out of thy hande. Whiche he easily byngeth to passe, when he hath once ensnared thee in a dyabolike slothfulnesse, and made thy bodie viterly vnapt for the battaile, and giuen to nothyng els but to lasciuious wantonnes. For by that meanes with little adoe he wynggeth out of thy hande the Swoyde of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, as he did by our firste Staundmother Eve: She had the Word of God, wherewith if she had firmly and stedfastly adhered, shee had not fallen. But when the Deuill sawe her negligently and carelesly to regarde the Word, he easilie pulld it out of her harte, and so obtained that whiche he would haue.

Our Sainct Peter theretofoze hath here sufficiently warned vs, that wee should strue and fight against the Deuill. To which battaile and encounterie, if nothyng auaileth to runne by and bounce hither and thither for any good Worke, whiche thou of thy self canst doe: but this onely must thou haue care vnto, that thou constantly sicke, and stedfastly by faith embrace the Word of God. If the Deuill then approche thee, and goe about to hurle thee into pensiuenesse of minde and desperation, by reason of thy manifolde sinnes and transgressions before committed: betake thou thy self straightwaies to the Word of God, wherein remission of all thy Synes is promised: commit thy self wholly therewith, and thou shalt see, that he will quickly packe away, and be gonie from thee.

Knowyng that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren, whiche are in the worlde.



Remember ye not, that ye must suffer temptations of the Deuill: see this rather comforte you that you suffer not the same alone. For there bee a greate many of you, and ye are all Brethren: and ye must all suffer and endure the same: All they take your partes, and in this conflict are aiders and helpers vnto you.

Thus

Thus hast thou this former Epistle of S. Peter somewhat largelie expounded: In the whiche thou art taught euen fullie and abundantly the whole summe of Christian doctrine, and wherein also thou maiest see Faith, Loue, and the Crosse, right aptly and copiously described: and maiest also read many goodlie instructions, and necessarie premonitions how to wage battaile, and continue fight with that greate Dragon the Deuill. Whiche Epistle who so euer hath rightly and thoughtlie learned, hath (no doubt) a riche Storehouse of all such thinges, as any waie concerne sincere and true Christianitie: In somuche that he shall not neede any other doctrine or helpe besides this: as in deede there is none other: Saying that God of the aboundaunce store of his mercie and bountie teacheth the same doctrine, in sundrie and many other places of the Scriptures. For other then this that is here sett doune by saint Peter, there is nothyng that can be taught, or that needeth to be displayed, such he herein hath omitted nothyng of all those thinges, whiche are expediente and behoouefull for a Christian to knowe.

Finallie, he here deliuereth the partes of a faithfull Preacher and good Pastour: to witte, that he should account it his bounden dustie, not onely to feede the Sheepe, but also to be carefull for them, and to praye for them, that God maie graciously encrease them in goodnesse, and strengthen them in Faith, whereby they maie both receiue and heare the Word, and also digest, vnderstande, and bying forth the fruites thereof. And thus with a prayer in the ende, he concludeth, saying:

20 And the GOD of all grace, whiche hath called vs vnto his eternall glorie by Christe Iesus, after that ye haue suffred a little, make you perfect, confirme, strengthen, and stablish you.



In this Prayer he commendeth them to God.

The God (saith he) who alwaies is the giuer of all Grace, and that not pinchyngly, or in parte, but who moste liberally and abundantly (as it were) by full heapes, powreth all his Graces

¶ f. iij.

vpon

Vpon the first Epistle

vpon you: who hath called you through Christe, that ye should enioy and be partakers of eternal glorie, & that not for any merite of your own, but by & through Christ. Whom if ye haue, ye also haue through Faith in him (not for any merite of your owne) eternall life and felicitie. He it is that shall make you perfecte, that you beeing by hym strengthened, maie growe and stande faste, readie to woork all good woorkes: He also shall confirme and stablishe you, that you shalbee able to suffer and abide all thynges.

- 11 To hym bee glorie and Dominion for euer and euer. Amen.

This praise, is that Sacrifice, whiche the duetie of all vs which bee Christians, is to offer. He addeth yet a few woordes moe.

- 12 By Syluanus a faithfull brother vnto you, as I suppose, haue I written brieflie, exhortyng and testifying how that this is the true grace of God, wherein ye stande.



I though I am not ignoraunte, that ye haue heard and learned these thynges afoze, so that ye greatlie neede not to bee taught the same againe. at my handes, yet thought I it good to write the same againe vnto you: to thintent I might bee as a Remembraunce to you (as it is the duetie of all true Apostles to bee) to perseuere and continue in that doctrine which ye haue learned, to practise and exercise it, and to liue accordyng to the preceptes, rules, and directions therof: not thinkyng that I doe preache any other thyng vnto you now, then ye haue afoze both heard and learned.

- 13 The Church that is in Babylon elected together with you, salureth you,

Salutations



Mutations were wont in this sorte to bee sent by letters. The Churche (saith he) that is at Babylon saluteth you. There were twoo greate Cities of this name, the one in Chaldaea, the other in Egypt, whiche is now called Alkair. Rome also by an Allegorie is called Babylon, because of the greate confusion of villainous vires, beeping gathered thither, as into the common Sinke of the worlde. And some would faine haue it to be here so taken. But I can not bee brought to that opinion. The woorde by interpretation signifieth Confusion. It is moste like to bee that Babylon in Assyria or Chaldaea, where Saincte Peter was the Apostle of the Circumcision.

13 And Marcus my Sonne.

Some saie this was Marke the Euangelist, whom he calleth his Sonne, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As saint Paule likewise calleth Timotheus and Titus his Sonnes, and writeth to the Corinthians, that he had begotten them in Christ.

14 Greete ye one another with the kisse of Loue.



His custome of Kissing is now growen out of vse. Wee reade in the Gospell that Christ kissed his Disciples, whiche was a custome then in those Countreys. Of this Kisse Sainct Paule also maketh often mention, Act. xx. j. Cor. xvj. ij. Cor. xiiij. Rom. xvj.

14 Peace bee with you all, whiche are in Christe Iesus, Amen.

That is, whiche faithfullie beleue in Christe. And this is the ende of this his former Epistle, wherein he commendeth them vnto the protection and tuition of Almighty God: who mercifullie graunt that wee maie throughe lie vnderstande, and effectually keepe and practise the doctrine compyled in the same. Amen.

An Induction or Preface of D.

Martine Luther, into the seconde
Epistle generall of Saint Peter.



Saint Peter perceiuyng and
foreseeyng that the true & pure
doctrine of Faith, should after
his daies be corrupted, obscured
and dimmed, writeth this Epi-
stle: wherein he meeteth with two errors at once,
arising out of the false understanding of this
doctrine of Faith; and giueth moste profitable
lessons of either parte: to witte, first, that no man
ascribe any such strength or force to VVoorke,
as that thei should be any waie able to iustifie vs
before God: for that is the effect of Faith onelie.
Againe, that no man should thinke, that Faith
can bee without Good woorkes. For, wee can no
soner preach of Faith, how that it alone without
the helpe of any our Good woorkes, maketh vs
iuste and acceptable before GOD; but straight-
waies some are readie to barke against vs, say-
yng, that then it is needelesse and bootelesse for
any manne to doe any Good dedes: and this wee
knowe

known by dauidly experience is the common speech and sayng. On the other side, when we urge and teache Good woorkes, & praise them: then Faith faileth and looseth muche of her dignitie. So that wee see it to bee a verie hard matter, in this behalfe to kepe a right meane, speciallie where there is want of painfull and faithfull Preachers.

Now, the Lorde teacheth vs, that we should attribute all our Iustificatiō before God, unto a sincere Faith in Christe Iesus. But when wee haue thus soundly preached, & inculked this infallible doctrine of Faith, wee must also teache, that Good woorkes muste needes ensue. Because wee maie not at any hande, (so long as wee be in this life) bee idle, without dooing some worke. All this doeth Sainēt Peter in this Epistle pursue and discourse vpon at large: meetyng with those, who peraduēture out of his former Epistle, had foded themselves with a false opinion, and mistaken his meaning: in thinking Faith to bee sufficient, although there be no good woorkes at all. And vpon this point, in the firste Chapter of this Epistle specially written: wherein he teacheth and willet the godlie to approue and declare the certaintie of their Faith by their Good woorkes.

Gg.j.

The

Vpon the second Epistle

The seconde Chapter is against them, which extoll VVorkes onelie, and throwe doune Faithe. And therefore he warneth vs aforehande of false teachers and seducers, which by newe doctrines of their owne deuise, should darken and abolishe this assurance, which eche one ought firmly to haue of Faithe: for he sawe, what detestable ingglyng, Apostacie, add departing awaie from the Faithe would bee in the worlde, which euen then beganne: as Saincte Paule saith, y. Theß. ij. The Myserie of Iniquitie doeth already worke.

In the third, hee plainlie describeth and setteth out the impietie of those that make a mockage and ieste of the woordes of God: and sheweth that in the latter daies the people through vnbelleef, and lacke of feare of the Iudgement of the laste daie shalbee euen as Epicures, whollie giuen to the fleshe.

This Epistle therefore is written to forewarne vs, to shewe our Faithe by our VVorkes: but yet not so, that we should haue any confidence or trust in our VVorkes, or thinke them any whitte, or in any respecte, meritorious, or auailable towarde our saluation.



The second Epistle Generall

of Saint Peter.

The first Chapter.



Inom Peter a seruante and an Apostle of Iesus Christe, to you whiche haue obtained like precious faith with vs by the righteousness of our GOD and Saviour Iesus Christe:

Grace and peace bee multiplied to you, by the knowledge of God, and of Iesus our Lorde.

Accordinging as his godly power hath giuen vnto vs all thinges that pertaine vnto life and godlinesse, through the knowledge of hym that hath called vs vnto glorie & vertue.

Whereby most greate & precious promises are giue vnto vs, that by the ye should be partakers of the godly nature, in that ye flee the corruptio, which is in the world through lust.

Therefore giue euen al diligence thereunto, Ioyne more ouer vertue with your faith; and with vertue, knowledge.

And with knowledge, temperance; and with temperance, patience; and with patience, godlinesse.

And with godlinesse, brotherly kindnesse; & with brotherly kindnesse, loue.

For if these thinges bee among you, and abounde, they will make you that ye neither shall be yole, nor vnfruitfull in the knowledge of our Lorde Iesus Christe.

For he that hath not these thinges, is blind, and can not see.

Vpon the second Epistle

see farre of, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his olde finnes.

10 Wherefore, brethren, giue rather diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye doe these thinges, ye shall neuer fall.

11 For by this meanes an entring shalbe ministred vnto you abundantly into the euerlasting kingdome of our Lord and Sauour Iesus Christe.

12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you alwaies in remembraunce of these thynges, though that ye haue knowledge, and be stablished in the present truth.

13 For I thinke it meete as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stirre you vp by putting you in remembraunce.

14 Saying I knowe that the tyme is at hande that I must laie doune this my tabernacle, euen as our Lord Iesus Christ hath shewed me.

15 I will endeuour therefore alwaies, that ye also maye be able to haue remembraunce of these thinges as they departing.

16 For wee followed not deceivable fables when wee opened vnto you the power, and commynge of our Lorde Iesus Christ, but with our eyes wee sawe his maiestie.

17 For he receiued of God the Father honore and glorie, when there came such a voyce to hym from the excellent glorie, This is my beloued Sonne, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voyce we heard when it came from heauen, beyng with hym in the holy mount.

19 Wee haue also a moste sure worde of the Prophetes, to the whiche ye doe well that ye take heede, as vnto a light that shineth in a darke place: vntill the daie dawne, and the daie starre arise in your hartes.

20 So that ye first knowe this, that no prophesie in the Scripture is of any priuate interpretation.

21 For the prophesie came not in olde tyme by the will of man: but holie men of God spake as they were moued by the holy Ghost.

I Simon Peter a Seruaunt and an Apostle of Iesus Christ, to you which haue obtained like precious Faith with vs, by the righteousnesse of our GOD and Sauiour Iesus Christ.



In the former Epistle, so in this, wee haue bothe a Subscription, also an Inscription: That wee maie knowe, bothe who wryteth it, and to whom it is wrytten; namelie to them that zealously heare the Word of GOD, and constantly stande by Faith in the sincere profession of the same. But what Faith he meaneth he? Eue that (saith he) which is by the righteousnesse of God. In which wordes he ascribeth Iustification to Faith onely, euen as S. Paule Roma. i. saith: In the Gospell the righteousnesse of GOD is reueiled from Faith to Faith: as it is wrytten, The iuste shall liue by Faith. Saint Peter therefore warneth them to stand ready, & not to be beguiled, nor to suffer the doctrine of Faith whiche thei haue receiued and learned, to slippe a waie from the. And whereas he here peculiarly speaketh of the Righteousnesse of God, he thereby excludeth and putteth backe all humane Iustice. For it is Faith onely that iustifieth vs before GOD: and therefore, Faith is called the Righteousnesse of God. For, before the worlde it is nothing accounted of, nay it is rather persecuted, and flayely condemned.

2 Grace and peace bee multiplied to you, by the knowledge of God, and of Iesus our Lorde.



This is an usual Salutation, wont to bee prefixed at the beginning of Letters and Epistles: The meaning whereof is this: I wishe vnto you the encrease of Grace and peace, and that ye maie bee therewith enriched euery daie more and more. Whiche grace cometh and floweth from the knowledge of GOD, and of our
Eg. iij. Lorde

Vpon the second Epistle

Lorde Iesu Christ, as if he should saie: This Grace no manne can haue vnieste he haue withall the knowledge of God, and of our Lorde Iesus Christ.

Of this knowledge of GOD, as well the Apostles as the Prophetes dooe verie often and almost continually make mention in the holie Scriptures, as Esaie the xj. In all my hollie hill thei shall not hurte, nor destroye, for the Earth shalbe full of the knowledge of the Lorde, as the waters that couer the Sea. That is, The knowledge of God shal bee as plentifull and abundaunt, as the waters of the swelling Sea, when it breaketh out; and surroundeth some whole Countrey. And here hence shall such peace and tranquillitie presently ensue, that no man shal seeke to molest or harme his neighbor. But this is not to knowe God, if thou dooe but onely beleue that God is Almighty, and that he hath created and made all thynges: and that Christ was borne of the virgine Marie, suffered death and rose againe: for this is muche tooe the Turkes, Iewes, and Devils beleefe. But the true knowledge of GOD is this: That thou haue a feeling of hym in thyne hart & conscience, and that thou be certainly perswaded, that God and his Christ is thy God and thy Christ; whiche beleeve the Devils and false counterfeit Christians haue not, neither can haue. Therefore the knowledge of God is nothing els, then a Gasse and entire Faith in Christ. For when thou thus fully knowest GOD and Christe, thou wilt make gladlie resign, and committe thy self vnto hym, and firmly beleue and trust in hym, as well in aduersitie, as in prosperitie, in death as well as in life. This settled confidence and sure trust, can not bee in them that haue euill consciences: that is, in them that want true and sincere Faith. For thei knowe GOD none other wise, but that he is the God of S. Peter, and of all the Saintes in Heauen: But for their God thei dooe not knowe hym, neither haue any feeling of hym, but haue hym and take hym, rather as their beaule tormentour and angrie Iudge.

To haue GOD, is to haue all Grace, all Mercke, and all goodnesse that can be named. To haue Christe, is to haue a Saviour

Sauour and a Mediatour, who hath brought vs vnto God, and made hym now all ours: and at whose handes he hath obtained for vs all Grace, and Blessyng. All these thynges, thou muste drawe and applye to thy self, and not doubte but that Christ is thyne, and thou Christen. And this is the true knowledge of Christ. An vnnaried woman seying a man, make safer this is a Hamer: but she can not saie: this is my Hamer, or my Houselbande. In like sort, all of vs can saie: This is God: But all of vs can not saie, that he is our God: because wee doo not all of vs beleue and trust in hym, and comfort our selues onely in hym and by hym. This true knowledge of GOD the Scripture tearmeth the face and Countenance of the Lorde: whereof the Prophetes speake verie copiously. For thei that see not his face, and knowe hym not, doe see but onely his vnder partes: that is, doe see hym as their angrie and displeased God: whereas if thei sawe his face, that is, if thei had the true knowledge of hym by Faith, thei should behold and see nothing but Grace and Mercie.

Wee see here how saint Peter in this his seconde Epistle purposely entreateth not of Faith, (for he largelie discoursed therevpon in his former Epistle) but his purpose is in this to write an Exhortation to them whiche beleue, that thei should shewe forth their Faith by Good woorkes. For he would not haue Faith to bee without Good woorkes, nor Good woorkes without Faith. But firste he requireth in vs Faith, and Faith beeyng once surely grounded, to shewe forth the Good woorkes. And therefore he addeth:

3 According as his godlie power hath giuen vnto vs all thynges, that pertaine vnto life and godlinesse.

When wee thoughtlie knowe God by Faith, wee are possessed of the franke gift of all his heauenly graces and benefites. Wee haue the influence of his Diuine power woorkyng in vs: whiche promoteth and furthereth vs vnto all thynges that pertaine vnto life and godlinesse: that is, when

Vpon the second Epistle

when wee beleue, wee receiue so many benefites of hym, that God honourably bestoweth vpon vs euen the giftes of his power: whiche power is diffused into all and euery our actions, & bothe is, and also effectually woorketh in vs. What soeuer we speake, or what soeuer we doe, it is not wee but GOD in vs that speaketh and doeth. He is in vs strong, mightie, and omnipotent, yea, euen when wee suffer torment and affliction, when wee are killed and dye, and when before the world we are altogether feeble and weake: In so muche that when wee haue not this power of God, there is in vs no strength at all, no facultie, no habilitie.

Now, whereas Sainct Peter saith, that all thynges are giuen vnto vs of his Diuine power, his meaning is not, as though wee should bee able to make Heauen and Earth, and to woork miracles, and doe wonders: For what good would that doe vnto vs? But wee haue all the giftes of his godly and Diuine power in vs, so farre as is necessarie and profitable for vs. And therefore the Apostle addeth further these wordes, That pertaine to life and godlinesse: That is to saie, wee haue all thynges by his godlie and diuine power, mooste abundantly giuen vnto vs, that wee should doe good, and alwaies liue in vertuous estate and blessednesse.

3 Through the knowledge of hym that hath cal- led vs.



His mightie power and greate grace of God, proceedeth not from elsewhere, then from this perfecte and sound knowledge of GOD. For when thou throughly knowest hym for thy God, he dealeth with thee as God. After this manner also Sainct Paule, Cor. i. saith, In all thynges ye are made rich in hym, in all kinde of speeche, and in all knowledge, as the testimonie of Iesus Christe hath bin confirmed in you: so that ye are not destitute of any gift, This is the greatest and the mooste necessarie gift of all others that

that God can giue vnto vs, whiche wee ought not to exchange
for all other riches, that is either in heauen, or in earth. For
what would it auail thee, although thou couldest goe through
fire and water, without taking any harme, and worke all
kinde of Miracles and wonders, if thou shouldest want this?
For there bee a greate many condemned, that haue been able
to worke suche Miracles. But this speeche hath and shal
mounte all Miracles: in that, God bestoweth and giueth so
greate a power vnto vs, whereby al our sinnes are forgiven vs,
and abolished quite out of remembrance: Death, Satan, and
Hell being victorie vanquished and shal be destroyed. Whereby
we possesse our Conscience without feare, and hope our har-
tes ioyful, merie, and bold, without being terrified of any thing.
Al whiche, the knowledge of GOD that calleth vs, doeth of
force and bying vnto vs.

Vnto glorie and vertue,
After what sort wee that Calling, where-
with God called vs, & ordeined this: God sent his
holie Gospel into the world, and caused the same
to bee proclaimed and preached abroad: for the
which, no man euer made any labour, no man euer payed or
made any entreatie to him: but before any due to much as once
thought of it, he offered and gaue this grace vnto vs, and giv-
red the same moste abundantly vpon vs all, that he alone
might haue all the glorie and praise, and wee enjoying suche a
benefite, Would ascribe this power and vertue al onely to him.
For it is no worke of our owne, but his. And therefore seeing
that this Calling is none of our owne, neither cometh of our
selues, it is not wike that we should liue by our selues in pride,
as though we had brought it to passe of our selues: but he is
only to bee glorified of vs, and all thanks are to bee giuen
vnto him, for so mercifullie bestowing and giuing his Gos-
pell vnto vs, and withall also for so strengthening vs with po-
wer and vertue against Satan, Death, Hell, and all mallice.

Vpon the second Epistle

...at our whatsoeuer.

4 Whereby moste greate and precious promises are
giuen vnto vs,

Since Peter hath adde this, to the two fourth and re-
clare the nature and force of Faith. For when we
knowe God to bee ours, wee haue also with hym,
by Faith, eternall life and the power of God, wher-
by wee ouercome and get the victorie both of Death and De-
uill. And yet for all this, we do not see these things, neither per-
ferle wee them, although all thinges be promised vnto vs. We
haue al things, and yet they appeare not: but in the last daie we
shall plainly discover and see all thinges present and apparant
ly laied open vnto our eyes.

Wee beginne here in this Epistle, but wee come not to
any full fruition or perfection thereof in this life. But we haue
this promise, that we liue here by the mightie power of God,
and that after this life we shalbe euertlastingly blessed. He that
faithfully beleueth these thinges, hath the same (as it were)
already in possession: he that beleueth not, hath them not, but
is sure to perishe eternally. How greate and how precious
these promises are, Saint Peter further yet declareth, say-
ing.

4 That by them ye should bee partakers of the god-
lie nature, in that ye see the corruption, which is
in the worlde through lust.

This benefite wee haue by the power of Faith,
that wee thereby are made partakers of God,
and come into a certain participation and com-
munion of his diuine nature. This is suche a
sentence, as the like ye shall not reade againe,
neither in the olde Testament nor yet in the newe. Howbeit
among the heathen writers it is often read,
that

that wee partake with the very diuine nature it self. But what is this nature of God: Euerlasting truth, righteousness, wisdom, eternall life, peace, ioye, pleasure, and all goodness that can bee named. He now that is partaker of the nature of God, is seized and privileged in all these: to wit, that he shall liue for ever, enioye perpetuall and endlesse peace, pleasure, ioye, and mirth: bee pure, holie, iust, and able to withstand and supplant Satan, Sinne & Death. Peters wordes therfore sounde as though he should saie thus: I looke how impossible it is, to take from God euerlasting life and eternall truth: so impossible is it also, that these thinges should be taken from you. If any man hurt you, he must needs also hurt God. For he must first oppresse God, that seeketh to oppresse a right Christian. All these properties are comprehended vnder this worde Diuine or Godly Nature: whiche worde be therefore used, because it containeth in it, so large a signification. These bee greate and singular benefites, if wee faithfully beleue the merits of them. But all that is here set forth, is (as afore was declared) Doctrines, wherevpon the groundworke of our faith is laide: for that whiche here is written is rather to declare and shewe what greate and excellent benefites grow vnto vs through faith. And therefore he saith: All these thinges shall ye bee sure to haue, if ye in liue, that ye shewe forth your faith. Flee and the corruption which is in the worlde through lust.

Therefore giue euen all diligence thereunto: ioyne moreouer vertue with your faith:



Hence Sainct Peter exhorteth them to declare, and shewe forth their faith by their good actions: as though he should saie: Seeing that ye haue obtained so many and so greate benefites by faith, that what God himself hath, ye also haue, endenour your liues and geue all diligence thereunto: be not slothful and sluggish, but shewe forth the effectes and fruites

Vpon the second Epistle

fructes of your faith: that is, let your faith appeare openly before men, let it bee outfull, charitable, seruiceable, diligent, effectuall and working, euer occupied in well doing: not idle, neither unfruitfull. Ye haue a good Farme and a fertile field to worke in: be ye diligent husbandoes therfore and take heed, leaue through your sloth and seruicie, there growe vp in it Brambles, Weedes, Darnell and Cockle.

5 And with vertue, knowledge.



This is that Knowledge, by the which ye make chiefly know how by reason to qualifie and leaue your liues, and how to direct the estates & vertues of your faith: that ye neither overmuch pamper and cocker your bodies, neither bring vnto it that which is needefull. For thus farre is the fleshy to bee bydoles and kept vnder, and no further, that it make bee sober, watchfull, and apt to good works: and not (as some Hypocrites vnder the disard of seuered holynesse doe) to hurt or destroye your bodies. For although GOD hate the Sinne that is in the fleshe, yet his will is not that you should therefore destroye your bodies. Ye ought to suppress and restrain the lustes and concupiscences thereof, but not to destroye or hurt it: but rather to minister vnto it sufficient allowance and maintenance, that it may continue sounde, healthy full and liuyng.

Knowledge also is signified and linked with vertue, wheras good respect and regard of honestie and modestie is had in all our conuersation and dealings: and when a convenient measure is obserued and kept in our Meates, Drinckes, Apparell, Reioyes, and all other our actions: so that wee neither Auerne from the rule of reason, nor giue any occasion of offence to our Neighbour.

6 And with knowledge, temperance:

Tempe



Temperance consisteth not only in eating
and drincking; but in obseruing that due
meane, whiche, knowledge (whereof we
spake afoze) doeth prescribe to bee vsed in all
our life and conuersation; as well in wordes
and woorkes, as in maners and dealinges;
that no man frame hymself to liue after a more sumptuous
and more softe then is conuenient: that a superfluitie of Appa-
raile and byauerie be auoided: and that no man goe more pom-
pouslie and gorgeously then is meete, or standeth with Chri-
stian modestie. But sainte Peter in these rales prescribeth no
certain rule, neither limiteth any boundes for the same (whiche
thyng our papisticall munchlike Clergies presumed to doe)
camprizing these matters within the compasse of certain Ca-
nons and rules deuised out of their owne haines, tying men
to a straitte obseruacion of these thynges after one and the
selfsame maner. Whiche thyng to bee vsed among Christians
is impossible: to wite, that a certaine sette order and precise limi-
tation of these eternall thynges, should bee comprehended
within the compasse of certein precepts and generall rules,
of euery particular person to bee particularly obserued. For
men bee of vnlike disposition: one is of a strong and sounde na-
ture, an other weake and feeble, and no man is at all tymes and
in all respectes so affected and giuen as an other is. And there-
fore euery one ought to haue a speciall regard to the constituti-
on and disposition of his owne bodye: what he is able to beare,
fasting and labour, and what he is not.

And with temperance, patience, and long suffering, with
kindnes, and gentlenesse, with meeknes, and lowliness of minde,

Sainte Peter thus amongst these wordes saith; although
ye liue at rayding to his wylage, meeknes, and temper-
ance; without giuing offence to any in your conuer-
sation and behauiour; yet thinke ye not that ye shall liue quietly
without temptation and persecution. For when ye beleue,
and leade an honest and Christian life, agreeable to your pro-
fession,

Vpon the second Epistle

lessions, the which he will not cease to beate and persecute you.
 Peter then must haue beene the true souerayn, which is one of
 the fruites of Faith, vnder which, as in the
 And with patience, godlinesse.

What soeuer wee doe, or what soeuer wee suffer in
 this life, let vs be thankfull to GOD for the same,
 not seeking our owne glorie, praise, or commenda-
 tion: but onely that thereby God maie be glorified: and that we
 so behaue our selues in all thynges, that it maie appeare, that
 wee doe all thynges for the loue, which we beare vnto God.

And with godlinesse, brotherly kindnesse.

Ere by Saine Peter hindereth vs one to serue an others
 turne, and to bee helpyng one to an other as Brethren
 one to be carefull of an others welfares, one not to hate,
 despise, or hurte an other: And this is another triall or fruites
 of our Faith, whereby we testifie to the world, that we haue
 that Godlinesse, which is spoken of afore.

And with brotherlie kindnesse, Loue,

Loue be meaneth that common and generall
 Loue, with the which wee are bounde to Loue as
 well our Enemies, as those which doe not accept
 of vs as Brethren, nor vouchsafe to liue together
 with vs frendlie and Brotherlie, as the Church that are our verie
 freendes in deede. In which fewe wordes, Saine Peter
 hath comprehended all that appertaineth to a Christian life,
 and what be the wofull and fruites of true Faith in deed:
 namely, knowlege to liue well, Temperance, Patience,
 Godlinesse, Brotherlie kindnesse, and a generall Loue to all.
 And therefore he aduertysheth further,

8 For if these thynges bee among you, and aboute
 them, they will make you as ye neither shal be idle, nor
 vnfraiefull in the knowledge of our Lorde Iesus
 Christe.



hen ye geue your selues to these euertises, and among
 kes, ye tread the right pathe, ye goe the right waie,
 and haue in you the true and sincere Faith: and fur-
 ther, the knowledge of Christ is effectuell and fruitefull in you.
 Take heede therefore to your selues, that ye make not light
 accomptes of these thynges. Keep your docters in affection,
 and so deale with your neighbours, as you knowe that Christ
 hath deale with you.

9 For he that hath no these thynges, is blinde, and
 can not see faste of, and hath forgotten that he was
 purged from his old synnes.



That hath not in hymself these fruite of his
 Faith, dooeth but (as it were) goe for his
 waie like a blinde man in the darke, not know-
 yng where to sette his foot: yea; such is his
 life, that he is full of doubtfull and vncertaine, in
 what case he standeth towards GOD. He neither hath true
 Faith, nor any further knowledge of Christ, sayng that, he
 can talke of hym as he hath heard others repute. And there-
 fore doeth but bluster blindly and at random in the whole course
 of his life; like a blinde manne that seeketh his waie with his
 hand; and hath forgotten that euer he was Baptized, or that
 his synnes were forgiven hym; and so do commeth he vnthank-
 full, idle, and vnfraiefull; without any consideration of his
 profession; liuyng loosely without any remorse of Consci-
 ence: Hapng neither keepng, neither yet so much as any
 taste of so greate Graces, gifts, and benefices. And this is an
 orthodoxy wherein Saint Peter exhorteth and stirreth vs by
 whiche defectue; to the practice of Good woorkes; thereby to
 declare

Vpon the second Epistle

declare and shewe forth, that wee haue a true, sincere and sounde, and not an Hypocriticall, or feigned Faith. Neuer- thelesse he sheweth earnestly ingeth and proueth this, that Faith onely doeth iustifie: and that where soeuer this Faith is, true Good woorkes doe also necessarilie ensue. That whiche now followeth, maketh for our confirmation herin.

IO Wherefore brethren, giue rather diligence to make yout calling and election sure.



In the Electiō and eternall predestination of God as so sure in it self, that there is no need to make it surer. And so also is our calling firme and stable. For he that heareth the Gospell, beleueth, and is baptized, is (doubtlesse) called, & is sure of his Salvation, yea, hee already hath it. Seeing therefore, that wee are called to these thynges, wee ought to giue all diligence (saith S. Peter) to approue and assure our Calling and Election to our selues in our Consciences, as the same is already assuredlie knowne with God. And this is a phrase or manner of Speech vsuall in the Scriptures, as Ephes. ij. Ye were dead & gotten from the cōuenaunces of promise, and had no hope, and were without God in the world. And although there be no man, whether he be good or badde, but God hath the rule ouer hym, (for he is the Lord of all Creatures) yet neuertheless (as I haue saied) that hee is without God, which dooth not acknowledge hym, loue hym, and truste in hym. Euen so here, although in it self the Calling and Election of God, wherewith he hath called and elected vs, be sure and vndoubted: yet is it not sure and stable tother, so long as thou dost not certainly beleue, and vndoubtedly assure thy self, that these tye belongeth vnto ther. And for this cause doeth S. Peter exhort vs, that wee should make our Calling and Election sure through good woorkes.

And here againe thou seest, how much the Apostle striveth with a trauaile vnto the fruites of Faith, as what shal appertaine

appertaine, and serue to her good into thy neyghbour towball,
yet also are they profitable unto thee, because thereby thy Faith
is strengthened and confirmed, considered by more and more
to the practise of Good works. Albeit also thou seest a
farre other vertue and qualitie; then is in the faculties of the
bodie, For the powers of the bodie the more they bee exercised
and used, the weaker and feebler they be; and in the end utterly
decaye; whereas contrariwise, this spirittuall vertue (if it bee
not exercised, decayeth and fainteth: But with much use and
practise it is strengthened and greatly encreased. And this
was the cause, why God at the beginning did leave the Chri-
stian Church, through hard and rough waies, voyded it, tour-
moiled it, and thoughtlie exercised it, in diuers conflicts of
Faith, through Ignominie, persecution and Death. For he
knewe, that hereby it should receiue strength and encrease, and
become the mightier, because the more that it was oppressed,
the more it flourished. And this is that, whiche Saint Peter
here meaneth, when he saith; that we should not suffer oure
Faith to be Idle or vnfruitfull sleeping; that the nature thereof
is such, that it groweth and encreaseth by vocation and per-
secution, so long till bee fullie assured and certaine of the Cal-
ling and Election of God; so that it can not bee deceived.

This is the marke that we must haue in touching this
destination. There are many lighte hypocrites, who being en-
dowed with verie small giuenance of Faith, will yet rashly
presume to discourse upon this point, and ratioually searche for
what place they bee reckoned and accepted with God. But doe
not thou enter into people with such scrupulous curiositie, for thou
shalt neuer by this waie attaine to that, whiche thou seekst. If
thou desire to bee sure of thy Salvation, and to what path thou
followest thou comest; in this the Saints Peter hath here shewed
the way for thou to take any other waie thou art in the way of
Faith bee sure to misse thyne end. Thyne end is to be in the
will, to seeke it thee; and that shall thou certainly knowe, and
bee assured of, when the Faith is thoroughly tried and tried;

• Non est illa fides que non sit in corde, sed in opere
1216

Vpon the second Epistle

10 For if ye do these thynges ye shall neuer fall.



Ye shall stand firme and steadfaste, ye shall neither stumble, fall, nor slide, but walke without offence: all thynges shall goe well with you, and frame to the beste: whereas if ye leane and trust to your owne foolish cogitations, and rotten deuises, the Deuill will quickely and easly hurle you headlong into desperation and hatred of God.

11 For by this meanes an entryng shall bee ministred vnto you abundantly, into the euerylastyng kyngdome of our Lorde and Saviour Iesus Christe.



This is the highwaie to heauen, and none other: And therefore let no manne thinke by tyrannies and deuises of his owne making, touching Faith, to come thither: there is nothyng touching the reuincing but a liuely Faith, that is thoughtlie tried and exercised: But alas, what repugnant doctrine to this, hath there bin folowed into the Church of GOD, by our seducing teachers, whyle they affirmed and taught, that if a man, hamping his headlong in wickednesse all his life, and at the laste pinche of his death, haue but a feeble pittauce (bee it neuer so small) and as it were but a verie sparke of Faith in hym, that he should bee sure thereby of saluation? But if thou wouldest, and desire thy repentance and Faith to be shewen, chynkyng and questionyng that thou hast it: it is euen presentlie and vpon the fowaine, haue the gift of such a iustifying Faith, thou trustest to a broken Reed, and shalt seeke after Faith and saluation, when it shall bee too late. Doe thou not bragge, that such thyngs shal be strong, thou scarcely be shewen: howbeit thou sayest this to be parte of them that bee weakes, because there is hope that thou shalt bee chynked, although it hardly and not usuallie so cometh to passe. But he whiche in this life thoughtlie and effectualle exerciseth and strengtheneth his Faith in dooing good, shall haue a ready and easie passage of waie, with chearfulnesse and assured confidence

dence to enter into the life to come. Suche a one maie dye with courage and gladnesse, suche a one maie (not esteeming this present life) depart hence in the peace of Conscience: And (as it were) with mirth and ioye, take possession of the kyngdome of Christe. Whereas on the other side, they that haue a languishing, fainter, weake, and vnderused faith, and haue not enured and acquainted themselves to good and godly exercises, shall not with like confidence and ioye as the others, enter into eternall life: And if they doe enter, yet shal they not find the doore so open, nor the entrance so easie into the kyngdome of Christe, but shall tremble and quake for feare, and be loathe to depart: withynge rather still in this life, to lye be dysordered, sick and diseased, then once to dye and exchange this life for any other.

Wherefore I will not bee negligent to put you also in remembrance of these thynges, though I knowe that ye haue knowledge and bee established in the doctrine of the Gospell, and doe also see the scope of the whole



f this we haue oftentimes spoken afore. Albeit GOD hath caused a great light to shine vnto vs, in this so mercifull a manifestation of the Gospell; so that we be thynke to know what a Christian life is, and also what Christian Doctrine meaneth, and doe also see the scope of the whole Scripture to tend to none other ende but this: yet, nevertheless, it is expedient and necessarie still to perseuere and go forward in preaching and teaching without ceasing, and to recreate & inculke the self same doctrine from tyme to tyme, if not to learne, yet to bee admonished and put in remembrance of doctrine before lested and forgotten. For there are two Offices in the Church as St. Paule teacheth Rom. xij. the one consisteth in Teaching, the other in Exhorting. He that teacheth, let hym take heed to his teaching and doctrine, and he that exhorteth, to his exhortation. Rom. xij. Teaching is, where

Vpon the second Epistle

Wee laie the foundation of faith, and preache the Gospell to them that haue not yet heard any thing thereof. Exhorting, or admonishing is, (as here saint Peter saith) to preache to them that haue bothe heard, and learned the same afoze, to encourage them manfully to proceede and continue in their well begonne enterprise, and to awake and stirre vp their dull and drowsie wares, to goe on forwarde, from sleppe to wakenesse, and from adored to degree euery daye more and more. Wee are all cladde and laden with this olde rotten Sacke, our fleshe and Bloud: which sit pulleth vs downe, and by a wether is the wrong waye, whereby the Soule is easily lulled asleepe, and brought into forgetfulness. And therefore it is verye behoofull, and necessarie for vs to bee continually exercised, as was a good houses holder keepeth his Seruauntes and Familie still occupied, and calleth vpon them to looke to their businesse, leaste they should growe into ydlenesse. Now, if the businesse of our nature bee suche, that it must bee called vpon and put in mynde to dooe thinges expedient, and behoofull for eternall good and maintenaunce of the Bodie, how muche more convenient and meete is it, that the same bee vsed and putte in practise in matters appertaining to the Spirit and Soule.

For I haue to meane as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stirre you vp by putting you in remembrance of the things which are written in the Epistle.

Saint Peter here calleth his Bodye a Tabernacle, wherein the Soule for a time sojourneth; and it is a muche like phrase to that which is vsed in the former Epistle, where he callith the Bodye of the Christian, a Vessel of Clay. And after the like sort, speaketh S. Paule ij. Cor. v. Wee knowe that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle be destroyed, we haue a building giuen of God, that is, an house not made with hands, but eternall in the Heauens; for the which we highly desire to be clothed with our house which is from Heauen, For so

long

long as wee are in this Tabernacle; wee fight and are hurt-
ned. And againe. But wee are comforted and are bold in
this, that wee knowe, that whiles wee are in the bodie; wee
are absent from the Lorde; But wee had leifer to remoue out
of the Bodie and to dwell with the Lorde. Peter saye the Sa-
uaile calleth this Boole of ours, an house makinge two ma-
nerv of Dwellynges, and twoo manner of pergrination; shi-
fences from home. By which phrase of speeche, Saying Peter
also here in this place calleth this Boole, a Tabernacle for the
Soule to sojourne in: by whiche name; he doeth muche exte-
nuate the reputation that is commonly made of it; and also seeth
it sower then moste parte of men account of it: for he doeth
not call it an House, but a Tabernacle, a poore Cottage such
as seerle Sheepeherders use to dwell in. The house is slender
and contemptible; but the treasure that is laid up and kept in
it, is riche and precious.

14. Soeving I knowe that the tyme is at hande that I
must laie downe this my Tabernacle: such as our
Lord Iesus Christ hath shewed me.

15. I will endeavour therefore alwaies, that ye also may
be able to have remembraunce of these things af-
ter my departyng.

16. Since Peter here testifieth of himself, that he is as-
sured of eternall life; and that by speciall revelation
from the Lorde; he knowe when he should dye: all
which was doen for our sakes, and to confirme and
strengthen our Faith; for it was verie expedient and necessa-
rie that there should bee some such men; that had in them sel-
ves a certayn perswasion and sure knowledge of their electi-
on; who might establishe & laie the foundation of Faith in others,
whereby it might bee out of all doubt knowen, that they pre-
ached not the opinions and fantasies of men; but the true and
sincere Word of God. Whiche men before they came to that
illumination and certaintie, God thoroughly tryed and maouen.

¶ Vpon the second Epistle

Therefore saith Saint Peter: I will not slee with my liuely
voyce admonishing and put you in remembrance; but I will al-
so committ these my admonitions to writing, and leaue my
exhortations written for your directions and instructions: that
after my death as well as in my life tyme, ye maie bee thereof
put in minde by others, and bee called vpon to obserue and put
the same in vre and practise. Behold here what a vigilant care
this Apostle had for the safegarde and saluation of Soules;
and yet neuerthelesse wee see, through the malice of Satan,
what shamelesse shiftes and coggling marchaundize hath been
and still is made of them.

16 For wee followed not deceivable fables when we
opened vnto you the power, and commyng of our
Lord Iesus Christe; but with our eyes wee sawe
his Maiestie:

17 For he receiued of God the Father honor and glo-
rie; which sheweth such excellencie to hym from
the excellent glorie: This is my beloued Sonne, in
whom I am well pleaséd:

18 And this voyce we heard when it came from hea-
uen, being with hym in the holy mount.



Ere S. Peter bringeth in the hystorie of the
transfiguration of Christe vpon the Mount,
written by the Euangelist Matthe the Chapt.
xviij. Wherein is declared how the Lorde Je-
sus, tooke three of his Disciples, viz. Peter,
James and John into an high Mountaine, and was there
transfigured before them, his face shynyng as the Sonne, and
his clothes being whiter as the Light: where also there appea-
red vnto them Moses and Elias, talking with hym: till at
length a bright Cloude shadowed them, and a voyce coming
out of the Cloude, saied: This is my beloued Sonne, in whom
I am well pleaséd: heare hym. At which when the Disciples
heard, they fell on their faces and were sore afraine. Then Je-
sus

his name and touched them and said: Justice be not afraid.
And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Je-
sus only. And as they came downe from the Mountaine, Je-
sus charged them, saying: She we the Vision to no man, vntill
the Sonne of man rise againe from the dead.

This therefore which here Saint Peter baptizeth, hath
this meaning: That Gospell which I haue preached and shew-
ed vnto you of Christ and of his coming, I haue not suck-
ed out of myne owne fingers endes, nor feigned out of myne
owne braine, neither yet receiued I the same from vaine and
Sophisticall Oracles and Anglers, that can roundely and
readily talke and tattle of matters, such as the Breake is write:
Wherens in truth, all that which is a wish/like of Cle-
quere, and galantresse of phisyes paines our (thinking them-
selues therein greate Wisemen) was nothing els but mere
topes, trifles, and vanities: These and such like persons wee
neither haue giuen eare vnto, neither followed and sought af-
ter: that is, wee haue not preached vnto you the doctryne of a-
mes, and foolish fantasies of Men: But we are moste sure of
our doctrine, and of the certaintie thereof, that it is of GOD:
because we haue bothe heard it with our eares, and seen it with
our eyes. To witte; when wee were present with Christe in
the Mountaine; and there bothe sawe and heard his glorie from
heauen proclaimed. Whose glorie was such, that his face shi-
ned as the Sunne, and his clothes were white as Snowe, and
wee also heard a voice from the high Paletie of the Father,
saying: This is my beloued Sonne, heare hym.

Therefore every preacher ought to be so sure, and so farre
from any doubting of the certaintie of his doctrine, and of the
Alloye whiche he preacheth, that he should not feare to loose
and confirme the same with his death, saying it is the Alloye
of Life, whiche he hath in hande. The Apostles therefore were
certainly assured of the truth of the Gospell, whiche they prea-
ched, and were out of all doubt that it was the true, and infalli-
ble Alloye of GOD: and withall, that the Gospell is none o-
ther thyng, then the preaching of Christe. And therefore none
other

other preaching, is to be heard; he that he of us will not
 hearken unto. And it is, beloved, I go and shall I fight with
 you. Let you be your own souls with you. And I shall
 if he should say: what shall he say to you, ye have me. And there-
 fore saith he. Peter, who have preached and made known
 unto you, that Christ is the Lord and Ruler of all things,
 and that all power is delivered unto him; which he would
 hearken unto, which he saith he believeth in him. These things
 you have not been deceived; and I have not your own imagi-
 nations, but we have both seen and heard them by the Revo-
 lution of God, who hath commanded us, to beate this Christ
 about. But what is the cause that he, Peter here seareth the
 Power of Christ from his Communion? His Power is in that
 he is Almighty, and able to do all things. And againe, in
 that he hath all things in subjection vnder his feet. This his
 Power shall perpetually continue, and stande in force, so long
 as the worlde hath continuance; and so long as flesh and
 blood hath any being upon earth. He has entire power of the
 Kingdom of Christ. He shall haue continuance in force, till
 the last daie, and then shall another world beginne, when as
 Christ shall deliuer by his Kingdom vnto God his Father,
 whereof is spoken by S. Paul. Cor. x. Christ is the firste
 fruites, then they that are of Christ; which shall bee at his
 coming, and then shall bee the ende, when he shall deliue-
 red vnto his Kingdome to God, such the Father &c. And a-
 gaine, When all thynges shall bee subdued vnto him, then
 shall the Sonne also hymself bee subiect vnto him, that did
 subdue all thynges vnder hym.

And whereto tendeth all this? Is not the Kingdom of
 God the Father now at this present and are not all thynges
 now also subdued vnto him? I answer, No. For in the self
 same place expoundeth hymself, he telleth a reason of his woy-
 des, saying: That God maie be all in all: that is, what soeuer
 a man longeth after, what soeuer he desireth to haue, that shall
 God bee vnto him, that (as S. Peter saith afore) we maie bee
 partakers of the Diuine Nature, And therefore what God
 hath,

hath, the same shall we haue, and what soeuer is needefull and
 necessarie for vs, shall bee ministred vnto vs: what soeuer any
 manne requireth, as Wisdome, Righteousnesse, Fortitude,
 and Life, it shall be giuen to vs: which wee now beleue by hear-
 yng with our eares, and truely possesse in the Woorde of God.
 But then shall the Woorde cease, and our Soules shall open
 and displaie themselves, and shall see and feele all thynges pre-
 sent. And this is it that bothe S. Peter and S. Paule meane,
 that now in this while, the power of Christes Kyngdome bea-
 reth all the auctoritie: now doorth the Woorde raigne and
 exercise his Empire: by whiche Woode, he now raigneth in
 his humanitie ouer Deuilles, Synne, Death, and Helle. And
 all these thynges shall not till the laste daie bee plainly mani-
 fested. For although God doeth raigne for euer & alwaies, yet
 is not the same manifestly to vs appauned. He seeth vs, but
 we see not hym. And therefore it behooueth, that wee also maie see,
 and then shall wee truely bee the Brothers of Christ, and the
 Sennes of God. In this soye Receiued he of God the Fa-
 ther, honour and glorie, (as here S. Peter saith) when as the
 Father subiected all thynges vnto hym, and made hym Lord
 of all, glorifyng and dignifyng him with these woordes: This
 is my beloued Sonne, in whom I am well pleased.
 And in these woordes S. Peters meanyng is, to confirme
 his Doctrine and preachyng, that it might bee knowen from
 it where it was. Besides this seying of the Faithful of Christ,
 and hear yng of the voice of the Father concernyng Christ, it
 was needefull also that the holie Ghoste must worke withall,
 and confirme him in that he had bothe seen and heard: the more
 to make hym to beleue it, and that he might bothe boldlie
 preache, and yet ouer confesse the same to others.
 Wee haue also another sure worde of the Propher-
 es, to the whiche ye doe well that ye take heede, as
 vnto a light that shineth in a darke place, vntill the
 daie dawne, and the daie daie and by our hartes.

Vpon the second Epistle



He commeth **H**. Peter next to the matter: and of that whiche he here saith, this is the verie meaning. All that I preache vnto you, is to this ende, that your Consciences maie bee surely settled & strengthened in the truthe: and that your hartes maie be firmly fixed vpon the same, not suffering your selues to bee caried awaie from it by any means, because wee are out of all doubt, that wee haue the verie pure and sincere Word of G^{OD}. For the Gospell is a matter of grate waight and importance, and therefore we ought to be most diligent, carefull, and precise, that wee keepe and retaine the same sincerelie and soundlie, without adding any thyng thereto. or mynnyng any false and erroneous doctrine therewith. And therefore **H**. Peter now after ward addresseth hym self to write against humane doctrines, and newfangled deuises of mindes Tole and sonde imagination. But for what cause dooeth he saie, Wee haue a mosse sure Woorde of the Prophetes? Truly I am thus fullie perswaded, that we shall neuer henceforth haue any suche Prophetes, as in the old Testament the Iewes had. A Prophete propriety is hee, that bringeth the glad tidynge of Iesus Christ: and although many of the Prophetes in the old Testament, prophesied also of other matters to come; yet thei came and were sent of God particularly to this ende and purpose, to preache and to tell of Christe. All thei that beleue in Christe, are Prophetes: For thei haue the chief head of that thing, whiche Prophetes ought to haue, although al of them haue not the gift of Propheciyng. For euen as though the faith of one Iesus Christ, we are all Brothers, Kynges, and Bylettes: so also through Christe we are Prophetes. For wee can all utter and declare those thinges that appertayne to the glorie of G^{OD}, and Christen life: wee also (so farre as is needefull and expedient for vs) can foretell of thynges to come, as that there shall bee a daie of generall Iudgement, and that wee shall all rise againe from the dead: and finally wee vnderstande the whole Scripture. This intuecelly **H**. Paule, sayng, You maie all Prophetic, one by one,

one. j. Cor. xiiij.

Therefore saith **S. Peter** thus: We haue suche a worde of the Prophetes, as is sure inough of it self: Onely see ye that it bee firme and sure to you. And ye doe well, if ye take heede vnto it: As though he should saie: It is verie necessarie and expedient for you to stande sure in it. For, it saith with vs in this case of the Gospell, muche like as it dooth with a man that is taken and enclosed in a darke house, at Midnight, who haue neede to haue Candlelighte, till it be daye light, that hee maie see whiche waie to goe. Euen so, the Gospell is as a Candle at Midnight, and in the darke: whereas all humaine reason and wisdom, is nothyng but mere errour and blindness. The Woordes is nothyng els but a Kyngdome of darkenesse. In this darkenesse, God lighteneth vs with his Candle, to wit, his glorious Gospell: whiche directeth our streppes aright, that wee maie see whiche waie to goe, and walke in this Woordes, till suche tyme as the Daynyng appeare, and the daye dawne.

This place doeth also manly oppugne, and beate doune all the foolish tromperies of humaine doctrynes. For, sayng that the Woordes of God is the Candle and Lanterne, that giveth light in darke coyners and obscure places, wee must necessarily therepou conclude, that al other thinges be mere darknesse. For if there had been any other Light beside the Woordes, **S. Peter** would not haue vsed these speeches. Neuer consider and weigh therefore, how skilfull and wise thou maie bee, that teache any other doctrine beside the Woordes of God: neither let it any whit moue thee, how gloriouslie and galantly so euer thei couche their smothered reasons. For where thou seekest and seekest the Woordes of God to bee absent, doubt not but all which thou hearest, is mere blindness and erroneous darkenes. Neither lette it any thynge moue thee, in that thei bragge and tale that thei haue the holie Ghost. For how can thei haue the Spirit of God, which haue not the Woordes of God? And therefore thei doe nothyng els but call Light, darkeueste, and darkenesse light, as it is saied, **Isaie. v.** This Woordes of God is the Gospell, whereby wee are through Christ redeemed from Sinne.

Vpon the second Epistle

Death, and Hell: he that harkeneth and giueth eare thereunto, hath a Linke or a Lampe lighted and kindled in his harte: By the which we may see, and are enlightened and taught what to our duties is appertaining. But where soeuer this Lampe is absent, there wee fall into our owne rotten waies, and seeke by Wozks, Merites, and deuises of our owne Forge, to bespake (forsooth) & make to our selues a nerer waie to Heauen. Here now and in suche like cases, thou maiest with the helpe of this Lampe, iudge, and plainly perceiue all these dooing Inuentionions and dreames, to bee nothyng but mere darkenesse. The aucthours whereof haue not the Light, neither can they abide the Light: and therefore they must needes remaine in darkenesse, and continue in blindnesse. For this is the Light, that teacheth vs what we ought to doe, and what thinges be needefull and necessarie to our Saluation: which be pointes farre differeng from the wisdom and skill of the Wozlde. Wee dailely stande in greate neede of this Light, and we must giue heede vnto it, euen till the laste daie. Afterwardes we shall not neede the Wozlde any longer: as a Candle is wont to be quenched and put out, when the broad daie light is once appeared.

20 So that ye first knowe this, that no prophesie in the Scripture is of any priuate interpretation.

21 For the prophesie came not in olde tyme by the will of man: but holie men of GOD spake as they were moued by the holy Ghost.



Herein S. Peter beginneth to oppugne false and erroneous doctrines, and of his words this is the meaning. Forasmuch as ye knowe, that wee haue the Wozlde of God, cleaue fast vnto it, and suffer not your selues to bee seduced by false Teachers, although they come and saie, that they haue the holy Ghoste. For know ye this first, that no prophesie in the Scripture is of any priuate interpretation. Note this sayng therefore well, and thinke not that ye shall euer bee able of

your

your owne reason and industrie to expounde and explaine the Scriptures.

Hereby are thowne donne to the grounde; all the proper and priuate interpretations of all the Fathers: and strait charge here giuen to the contrarie, that no man should relye or leane to any suche explanations. Whether Hierome or Augustine or any other of the Fathers interpret and expounde any place of the Scripture, of themselves, or by any of their owne deuised gloses, we are (if the same be dissonant to the doctrine contained in other textes of the sacred Scriptures) utterly to refuse those their interpretations. For S. Peter doth here forbid any man to interpret and expound the Scripture by his own spirit. The true explanation thereof, is the woork of the holie Ghost, and he it is that must interpret and expounde the same, or els it must be left without interpretation. Therefore, if any of the auncient Fathers can auerre and iustifie his interpretation and exposition by the Scripture, and can thereby proue that the place whiche he expoundeth, is so to bee taken and vnderstood, we are reuerently to accept and embrace his saynges: if no, we are not bounden to beleue hym.

Within the compasse of this Censure also, wee maie see, how S. Peter noteth and nippeth the spirites of those greate Rabbines & Doctors, that are in countenance and credite accounted and reputed for the best and the grauest Clerkes. Therefore this must be holden as a firme & generall rule, that no man (whosoener he be) interpreting y^e Scripture after his owne humbur, is to bee credited, no although he alledge and byng Scripture for hymself: because the true Sense thereof can not by any meanes bee attained and founde by the priuate enarration of Man. In this poynt haue stumbled and soulie failed our Graund maisters and teachers whiche haue heretofore taken vpon them to expounde and interpret the Scripture. As when thei expound and stretch that sayng of Christ, Matth. xvj. Thou art Peter &c. to be me ant of the Pope, which addele interpretation is of mans owne deuise, and forged by the Expositours themselves, to drawe it to the pitch of their own

Vpon the second Epistle

conceit and to serue their owne turnes, and therefore not to be credited: for that they be not able to prouue by Scripture, that this name Peter any where signifieth the Pope: but we are well able to proue that Christ is the Rock, as S. Paule saith: j. Cor. x. This interpretation is true and sound, for we are sure thereof, and knowe that it is not deuised and inuented by man, but grounded and drawn out of the very Word of God. For those things that are written & mentioned in the Prophetes, were not inuented and deuised by men, but holy me spake as they were inspired and moued by the holie Ghost.

And thus endeth this first Chapter, wherein Saint Peter hath first taught vs the right and true good Moores in deede: whiche wee ought to practise and walke in, thereby to notifie and declare our Faith. And next, that in the Church of Christ there ought nothing to be preached, but onely the Word of God, which remaineth and continueth for euer, and by the whiche our Soules are saued and made to liue eternally. Now next here followeth a shrewdfull admonition, wherein bothe Christ and his Apostles warne vs diligently to beware of false Preachers. And this also must wee with all diligent care looke vnto, that wee suffer not our selues to be bereaued and cozened of this right and power of examining iudging and prouing doctrines: neither to be so pent in and curbed, that we should staie and expect till we see what the Councelles decree and what wee shall beleue, and what not: keeping our heades so vnder their girdles, that they would not willingly suffer vs to beleue and embrace any thing but what they list to set downe, ratifie and determine.

The



The second Chapter.



VT there were false Prophetes also among the people, euen as there shalbe false teachers among you; which priuily shall bryng in danable heresies, euen denying the Lorde; that hath bought them, and bryng vpon themselves swift damnation.

2 And many shall followe their damnable waies, by whō the waie of truth shalbe euill spoken of;

3 And through couetousnesse shall they with fained wordes make marchandise of you, whose iudgement lōg agoe is not farre of, and their damnation sleepeeth not.

4 For if God spared not the Angels: that had sinned; but cast them downe into hell and deliuered them into chaines of darknesse, to be kept vnto damnation;

5 Neither hath spared the olde world, but saued Noah the eight person, a preacher of righteousness, and brought in the flood vpon the worlde of the vngodly.

6 And turned the Cities of Sodom and Gomorreh into ashes, condemned them and ouerthrew them, and made them an example vnto them that after should liue vngodly.

7 And deliuered iust Lot vexed with the vnclenly conversation of the wicked.

8 (For he being righteous, and dwelling among them; in seeing and hearyng, vexed his righteous soule from daie to daie with their vnlawfull deedes.)

9 The Lorde knoweth to deliuer the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the vniust vnto the day of iudgement to be punished.

10 And

Vpon the seccnd Epistle

10 And chiefly them that walke after the fleshe, in the lutt of vnclennes, and despise the Gouvernement, which are presumptuous and stande in their owne conceit, and feare not to speake euill of them that are in dignitie.

11 Whereas the Angels which are greater both in power and might, giue not railing iudgement against them before the Lorde.

12 But these, as brute beasts, led with sensualitye and made to bee taken and destroyed, speake euill of those thinges whiche they know not, and shall perish through their owne corruption.

13 And shall receiue the wages of vnrighteousnes, as they which count it pleasure to liue deliciously for a season. Spots they are and blottes, delityng themselues in their deceiuyngs, in feastyng with you,

14 Hauyng eyes full of adulterie, and that can not cease to sinne, beguilyng vnsable soules: they haue hartes exercised with couetousnesse, they are cursed children,

15 Whiche forsakyng the right waie, haue gone astraye, following the waie of Balaam, the sonne of Bolor, which loued the wages of vnrighteousnesse.

16 But he was rebuked for his iniquitie: for the dumme Asse speakyng with mans voyce, forbade the foolishnesse of the Prophete.

17 These are Welles without water, and Cloudes caried about with a tempest, to whom the blacke darknesse is referred for ever.

18 For in speakyng swelling wordes of vanitie, they beguile with wantonnes, through the luttles of the fleshe them that were cleane escaped from them whiche are wrapped in error.

19 Promising vnto them libertie, and are themselues the seruantes of corruption: for of whom soeuer a man is overcome, even vnto the same is he in bondage.

20 For if they, after they haue escaped from the filthinesse of the worlde, through the knowledge of the Lorde, and of

the Sauour Iesus Christ, are yet tangled againe therein, and ouercome, the latter ende is worse with them then the beginning.

21 For it had been better for them, not to haue known the waye of righteousness, then after they haue known it, to turne from the holy commaundement giuen vnto them.

22 But it is come vnto them, accordyng to the true proverbe, The dogge is returned to his owne vomit: and, The sowe that was washed, to the wallowyng in the myer,



Uj.

I But

Vpon the second Epistle.

I But there were false Prophetes also among the people, euen as there shalbe false teachers among you:



A true Prophecie hath his proceeding from the holie Ghost, and so hath had it from the beginning of the worlde, and shall haue till the ende of the same: so that nothing is to be preached, but the sound and sincere Word of God. Howbeit it hath alwaies been seen, that as there haue been true Prophetes, sincerely uttering the pure Word of the Lord, so haue there still been false Teachers, and malicious Seducers: And shall so hencefoorth continue till the ende of the Word. When ye therfore haue the true Word of God, thinke none other wise, but ye also shall haue false Teachers. This admonition maie stand for a generall and infallible rule: that wheresoever the Word of GOD is sincerely preached and taught, there also by and by arise false Teachers, and dissembling Hypocrites: The reason is; because although the Word bee preached to all, yet doe not all embrace and beleue it. Thei that beleue it, doe followe it, and conforme their liues thereafter. But the greater number, whiche bee thei that beleue not, doe contrarie and take the same Word in a false sense, contrary to the true meaning of the holie Ghost, and thereof it cometh to passe, that there spring and growe up so many false Teachers. But full slenderly haue we heretofore harkened vnto this admonition: For what dreames soener haue been obtruded and preached vnto vs, wee rashely and without iudgement haue been readie to accept, embrace and allowe the same. And by this meanes wee haue rushed headlong into suche a brainlicke doltishenesse, that wee haue verily thought the Pope, with the rable of his Chapleins and Bishops Clergie could not erre. And thei whiche should and ought to haue kept vs from errour, were the firste, that taught this doctrine vnto vs. Here wee learne, that wee are unexcusable, if wee beleue amisse, or followe and allow any false and erroneous doctrine.

trines: ignorance shall not excuse vs; seeing wee haue been so diligently warned aforehande. And God hath expressely charged, that every one should bee able to iudge of that which is preached, and to giue a reason of the doctrine, which he hath receiued: if wee neglecte or make small account thereof, wee are in a sorrowful case, it shall not auail vs (I saie) to plead ignorance. The danger is no lesse, then the hazard and losse of the saluation of our own Soules. And therefore it behooueth eche one to knowe which is the true Word of God, that he maie adhere and cleaue vnto it: and which is false doctrine, that he maie flee and eschue it.

Of suche kinde of admonitions, that we should take heede of false doctrines, wee haue in many places of the Scriptures greate store. Sainet Paule in the laste Sermon that he made to the Ephesians, when he tooke his leaue of them, and was now ready to departe toward Hierusalem, forewarned them of these thynges, sayng: I knowe, that after my departing, greuous Woolues shall enter in among you, not sparing the flocke: And of your owne selues shall menne arise, speaking peruers thinges, to drawe Disciples after them. Act. xx. Christ also foretold with no lesse to his Disciples, Math. xxiii. When any shall saie to you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, beleeue it not. For there shall arise false Christes and false Prophetes, and shall shewe greate signes and wonders, so that if it were possible, they should deceiue the very electe. Againe S. Paule i. Timo. iij. hath these wordes: The Spirit speaketh euidentlie, that in the latter tymes some shall departe from the Faith, and shall giue heede vnto Spirites of error, and doctrines of Deuilles, which speake lyes through hypocrisie, and haue their Consciences burned with an hot yron, forbidding to marie, and commaunding to abstaine from meates, which God hath created to be receiued with giuyng thanks, &c. As these pmonitions were both vehemently and seriously uttered, I ought we to haue taken more heede, and to haue been the wiser in looking to our selues. But we haue had no regard to them, they haue liue or nothing as

Vpon the second Epistle

ruiled vs: yea, we haue suffered our selues still to be wilfully seduced and noyzeled in error. Let vs now see, who these false Teachers are, of whom S. Peter here speaketh. Cruelly I doe thinke it was not without the singular and hidden councell of God, that our Popish Prelacie were called and tearmed by the name and title of Teachers and Paisters, to the ende euery one might plainly see who they were, who S. Peter meant. For he useth here the same verie woordes, False Teachers, or false Doctours and Paisters: he saith not, false Prophetes or false Apostles.

I. Whiche priuile shall bring in damnable heresies,



Heresies, Sectes, bowed Orders, and Professions of life, he therefore calleth damnable, for that, who soeuer haltereth hym self into any of the same, is in a damnable case, and in the state of perdition. They shall priuile (saith he) bring in Heresies and Sectes. For they shall not openly detecte the Gospell and Scripture of falshood, nor directly charge it with vntuthe, for that were a cleane contrary course, and would flatly & altogether marre the byt of their malicious plot: but they shall vnder pretence of greate cloked holinesse, still retain the names of God, Christ, Faith, Church, Baptisme, Sacramentes, and suche like: and shall bee contente to suffer the same to bee honoured and reuerenced: But vnder these names they shall litte creepe in, and priuile softe in doctrines of their owne forgyng and stampe, altogether discrepant and derogatorie from the right honour and worship that is due vnto God. And therefore there is greate difference, betweene preaching directly against Christ, and preaching contrary and hypocritically vnder colour of truly worshyping Christ. As for example, if I should thus preche: Christ is the Doome of God, perfect God and perfect manne, and he that beleueth in hym, shall be saued: this preaching is true and aduouchable by the Gospell and Scriptures. Now, if another should come
and

and preache thus: Christe is not the Sonne of GOD, neither was he euer incarnate, and Faith doeth not Iustitie: this manner of preaching were moste false, and moste directly contrarie vnto all truthe. But of suche plaine and palpable godlesse doctrine, S. Peter doeth not in this place speake, neither dooe our Papistes and Punkishe Pawmettes so grosselie deale: but thei prinitie coigne a counterfaite kinde of doctrine, and soile it in among vs, in steepe of true and sounde religion. As when thei saie thus: It is true that Christe is bothe perfecte God, and perfecte Manne, and that he suffred death for our sinnes, in whom whosoever beleueth not, cā not be saued. These and suche like Articles, as thei affirme to bee true, so doe thei holde, that thei appertaine and serue for the vulgare and common sorte of people. Lett vs therefore (saie thei) institute some perfecter waie and preciser trade of Life. Let vs binde men by Vowe to Chastitie, to Ponertie, and to an Obedience to their professed Rules, let vs teache them to builde Abbaies, Monasteries, Celles, and Hermitages, and lette vs flatly perswade them, that if thei zelously and deuoutly doe thesame, thei shalbe sure, as soone as the breathe is out of their bodies, to goe straigh t to Heauen. When these and suche like dotages are preached, and colozablie instilled into mennes myndes, that there is nothing moze excellent & blessed then Virginitie: nothing moze meritorious then counterfaite & feigned Obedience: that Priests and Freers liue a farre better and perfecter life then others. Here in these pointes there is no open defiaunce in flat wordes, made against the sinceritie of Christian doctrine: herein is neither Faith nor Baptisme expresselie denied, neither yet doe thei renounce or denie Christe to bee the Saviour of the Worlde: but yet (neverthelesse) the doctrine of truthe is here coortly impugned, and clouded with deuisles of mannes diuile intencion: and menne are thereby drawn and seduced from the right waie, and are brought to an overweeping and selfliking of themselves, trusting in their owne Merites, Worshes, and rotten Ceremonies. Thei beleue that Christ the Sonne of God, in his humantie suffred death, and rose a-

L. iij.

gaine

Vpon the second Epistle

gaine the thirde date, & that he is the Saviour of the worlde, &c. but thei doe not firmly and onely trust in hym: for if thei did, thei would not so scrupulously bee tied to their owne Lowlie trash, and beggerly Traditions.

After the same manner, did thei beare the Laicie in hand, that they could not attaine to saluation, except they did after their directions. Ye are Christians (saie thei, we confesse) but this is not enough: ye must doe suche and suche good workes: ye must build Churches in the honoꝝ of this and that Saint: ye must erect and founde Monasteries and Abbayes: ye must buie certaine Trentalles of PASSES to be said, or sung for you: ye must pyne awaie your selues with fastyng and suche like. Thus haue the sely poore people been beguiled, and thus haue thei been perswaded and brought to shew themselves as well likers of these trumperies, thynkyng it to be the Kinges high waie to heauen: and these rotten workes of blinde deuotion to be of all workes the best, because they sawe them which caried the tylie of the Church, to allotte and followe the same: so that in pꝛocesse of tyme, there grewe to bee as many factions, Sectes and Religions as there were Cities, yea, almoste as there were Men. Whereas they should rather haue taught them thus: Ye are Christians, as well as thei that bee an hundred myles distant from you: ye haue all one Chyist, one Baptisme, one ffaith, one Spirit, one Worde, one God: there is no worke that ye of your selues are able to doe towarde your saluation, or able to bring you to the perfection of a right Christian. If this Doctrinne might generally bee preached, men should be kept in the fellowshippe and vnitie of one Common ffaith, neither would there bee any difference at all in thinges appertaynyng to God, but all would be alike: and oue the same that an other is. This Communion and vnitie thei haue broken and disioynted, in that thei seduce and misleade vs, in teaching vs that wee must merite heauen by our Workes: drawing vs thereby from ffaith to our owne Pharisaicall dooings. So Peters wordes therefore if he bee well marked, caue this meanyng: There shall arise among you, Sophisticall Schoolemen,

men, Doctors, Teachers, Priests, Bunkes, and suche like, bepng the very offall and Skumme of the Worlde, who shall bypng in pernitious sectes, odible orders, damnable heresies, and seduce the Worlde with their lping and false Doctrines. These, these, (doubtlesse) are thei of whom the Apostle here spaketh. For thei are all thus perswaded and verely beleue, that their wilfully pprofessed Orders are meritorious to the, and shall bypng them to saluation: and perswade others also to put confidence and trust in them. If this were not their opinion, who would thinke but thei would rather liue free abroade, then (as thei do) cage and empound themselves in their Cloysters, as it were in Prisons.

I Euen denying the Lorde that hath bought them.



Hei are readie to saie, that thei doe not denye the Lord: but if this question be demanded of them: what thei meane or what they seeke to geethrough these their vowed pprofessions, if thei beleue (as thei saie thei doe) that they are redeemed by Christ, and that their sinnes are washed awaie by his blood: Thei will quickly aunswere, that (forsooth) Faith alone is not sufficient, and therefore they must haue the helpe of good Works. Thus with mouth they confesse God, and in harte flaily renounce hym.

Consider also what pittie and vehement words S. Peter here vseth. They denye (saith he) the Lord that hath bought them: Thei ought to bee subiect vnto hym, as vnto their supreme Soueraigne Lord, whose inheritaunce thei are. Now, they dooe beleue that he is the Lorde, and that he redeemed the worlde by the sheddyng of his precious blood: but that he redeemed them, thei cannot nor doe not beleue, neither dooe thei acknowledge and take hym for their Lorde: for thei saie and confesse, that he hath bought and redeemed them, but yet thei are not perswaded that that is enough and sufficient: because thei must (thei saie) discharge and satisfie for their sinnes by

Vpon the second Epistle

by their *Workes*. To whom, this answere maie wel be made: If thou canst doe any worke to take awaie thy Synnes, what good hath Christe by his death doen vnto thee? For there can not bee twoo Christes to take awaie Synnes. Hee (as good right it is) must bee acknowledged to be the onely Redemer and taker awaie of Sinnes. Whiche beeyng graunted to bee true (as it is mooste true) thou thy self canst dooe no maner of worke to take away thy sinnes. If thou do goe about or chynk any whyt by thy workes to merite Heauen, thou canst not truly saie, thou beleuest that he taketh awaie thy Sinnes. And this is flatly to denye Christe. For although these fellows doe acknowledge Christe to bee the Lorde, yet doe they denye that he bought them. Thei beleue that he sitteth in heauen, and is Lorde: but the takynge awaie of Sinnes, whiche is his proper and peculier office, thei nippe and take quite from hym, and attribute it vnto their owne workes: and by that meanes, leaue nothyng to hym but the bare name and tytle: ascribving his power, worke, vertue and office vnto themselves. And therefore Christ mooste cruelly forgetolde, that there shoulde come many in his name and saie, I am Christ, and shal deceiue many. Math. xxiii. Mar. xiii. For these Iusticiaries and Peritemongers thus tving Saluation to *Workes*, shewe forth in their so doyng (as though they shoulde saie) not I am [called] Christe, but I [am] Christ. Whereby thei snatch and applye vnto themselves that office, whiche is onely proper and peculier vnto Christ: and so thrust Christ out of his seate, and place themselves therein.

This is so euidently knowen, that no man can truly denye it. And therefore worthily doeth S. Peter tearme them damnable & pernicious Heresies, for thei leade a man straight to Hell, insomuche that I greatly feare, trait in a thousande of them, there is scarcely one saued. For who soeuer of them will bee saued, must quight abandon himself and all that of himself he hath or can doe: yea he must frankly confesse and from the harte pronounce these wordes: The rules of my vowed Obedience are nothyng worth, my Chastitie can not saue me, my *Workes*

woykes can not take a waie any parte of my So in nor yet.

I And bryng vpon themselves swift damnation.



Their damnation shall come bypon them sooner then they thinke: although God seeme to deferre his commyng, and to tarie long, yet will he hasten his iudgment, and come tyme enough to their cost. But this shall not bee corporallie and visiblie to the eye, but so and in suche sorte as it is sett downe in the Lv. Psalm. They shall not live out halfe their dayes: that is, Death shall catch holbe of them sooner then they think, so that they shall be giuen to sale as Ezechias did: Esay. xxxviii. I said in the middest of my daies, I shall goe to the gates of the graue. As if he should saie: O Lorde God, is Death come bypon mee so sodainly? For they that liue without faithe, are loath to dye: the longer they liue, the more they desire to liue: and the more of this painted holinesse that hath appeared in them, the terribler and dreadfuller is Death vnto them, namely to those that haue such tender & spiced consciences, which afflict themselves in these wooykes of their owne; which they take to be meritorious. For it is impossible, that any man should overcome Death by any humaine strength: Wherefore euer faithe is not, there must the conscience needes tremble and dispaire. But where faith is, there Death seemeth many times to tary too long ere he come: whereas to the faithlesse and vnbelyeuynge, it alwaies cometh sooner then they would haue it.

Saint Peters meaning therefore is, that they whiche see abroache suche Sectes and Heresies, and consequently deny Christ, dye moste vnbillingly, and that with horror and desperation. For it can not otherwise bee, seying they stand doubtfull of their saluation, being thus of suche like tearmes: Who can tell whether God wil bee mercifull vnto mee and forgiue me my Sinnes or no? And thus while they stand in doubt, with these wooyes, [Who can tell? and who knoweth?] their

Vpon the second Epistle

consciencs can neuer be merie nor quiet. And the longer that thei continue plunged in this wauer png doubte, the more terrible still will Death bee vnto them: whiche can neuer bee overcome, vnlesse synne and guiltinesse of conscience be first taken a waie. So that Death therfore, destruction and damnation shall come vppon them, so that thei shall alwaies remaine in perpetuall death.

2. And many shall followe their damnable waies,



hat this hath come to passe accordyng to Peters prediction, all men well knowe. For there were almoste no Parents, but thei desired and were wyllyng, to make some one of their Children either a Priest, or a Dunke, a Nunne, or some like idle Notarie. Therefore foolish Fathers made foolisher Children: while they mislikyng and heeping wearie of the troubles, disquietnes and discommodities of Patrimonie, meant hereby to ease and ridde their children from the same, by tyng them thus to a vowed Profession, chynkyng thereby to make them liue both quietly, vnder and delicately. Wherein thei shewed themselves mereli ignorant, what an holp thing Marriage is, and how blessed the troubles and greenes thereof are. Saint Peter therfore in these wordes forgetolde, how the worlde should bee pestered with Priests, Dunks, Nunnas and Notaries. To whiche Profession most of the Youth of the worlde betooke themselves, euen as if it had bin into the clutches and clawes of the Deuill: so that (alas) too truely hath St. Peter foresheued, that these damnable waies should bee folowed of many.

2 By whom the waie of truth shall be euill spoken of,



And this also wee both haue seene, and at this date in many places of the Worlde dooe see to come to passe. For, he that feareth GOD, and studieth to leade a Christian life, is sure to bee euill reported of,

of, rahated and detested: and the true sincere profession of the Gospel shall not escape the rancorous note of spightfull reprehension, but bee spurned against and ill thought of, as though it were Heresie and Errour. If any man in zeale of truche should preache and tell them, that their Sects bee contrary to the doctrine laied downe in the Gospel, for that, thei carie men awaie from Faith to Worke, thei straightwaies with open mouth crye out against him, and saie: Accursed art thou, for thou seducest the worlde. They beinoulie also blaspheme God, collyng and turnyng the wordes of Christ which waite thei list, to serue their owne turnes: of expeile Commmandementes, makyng Consultations, Counsailes, deliberations, and dispensations: forbidding that whiche Christe plainly allowed, and did: and mak yng that to bee as Sinne, which is no Sinne: pea whosoever he bee that speaketh against these their blasphemous treacheries and enormous iniquities, shalbe sure to bee condemned and burned to ashes. For the waye of truche is a right vertuous life and sincere conversation without any halting or hypocrisie: This truche becomg onely left downe in the Worde of God, and by faith firmly beleueed, is that waie wherein all true Christians ought to walke. Whiche waie and truche, these fellows can not in any wise abide, but blaspheme, revile, slander and condemne it: to the ende they maye establish, extoll, magnifie and mainteine the peruerse practise of their owne shamelesse Sects.

3 And through couetousnesse shall they with fained wordes make marchandise of you,



Couetousnesse for the moste parte is the companion of Heresie: These fowers of false doctrine generally haue this respect vnto their belly, as our Sayes hath been manifestly seen. For none of them would rather suffer by a word or a humble by their Engines, as that called the, I have no rep. Among them, no penit, no better offer, no better no

Vpon the second Epistle

Colledge, no Monasterie nor Freerie was erected and pro-
 pled, till order was taken for their maintenance, and that e-
 ven riotously and abundantly: neither was there any of these
 Houses, that for Gods sake onely, would doe any thyng for a-
 ny man. Money must be had, without it there was no dealing.
 If purses were penuriose, there was nothing to bee gotten at the
 handes of these pitifull Lurdaines, and holie Pastors. But
 where true faith beginneth to be preached, there is very little
 money stirring, it byngeth no store of pence at all: for then
 howe goe Pilgrimages: Bulles and Pardons will not bee
 bought of any man, Abbeyes and Nunneries are not este-
 med vpon all whiche (not withstanding,) more then halfe the
 wealth of Christendome was bestowed: and no profite at all
 redounding or coming thereof to any man, sayng onely
 to these greaue Priests, Punks, Freers and Nunnes. But
 by what waies and meanes doe thei thus serape together and
 rake to themselves, so much money? With fained wordes
 (saith S. Peter) shall they make merchandise of you. For
 they haue couened certaine limoth speeches to serue their tur-
 nes, whereby to cozen men of their money: as when thei saie:
 If thou wilt bestowe so many hundred Crownes vpon our
 blessed Lorde, or vpon this or that Saint, thou shalt therein
 doe a merueilous meritorious worke: thou shalt buye there-
 with so many Pardons: and for so many thousand yerres: thou
 shalt haue cleare remission of all thy Sinnes: and finally thou
 shalt deliuer so many of thy freendes Soules out of Purga-
 torie &c. These and such like wordes are deuised and feigned
 for none other purpose, but to pick mens purses, and gleane
 their money from them. For in all these trifling trash, which
 thei sell so deare, and wherewith shall thei craue together for the
 huge Summes of money, there is not a mite of merite, grace
 or remission of Sinnes, how muche forer they haue a wett
 the holie and precious Word of God, to cleare the eyes of
 the blinde, and to serue their auaritious appetites. So also
 of the Sacrament of the blessed bodie and blood of Christ,
 what other thyng practizen they, but a shamelesse marchan-
 dyng:

wyng? for they used the same in a manner to none other purpose, but as a baite to catch men, and to wyng money from them. Judge and consider now (good Reader) whether saint Peter many hundred yeeres agoe, hath not notably and liuely set forth and described our holie Romishe Clergie with their vsuall properties.

- 3 Whose iudgement long agoe is not farre of; and their damnation sleepeeth not.



Their iugglyng & paltrie (for that is S. Peters meaning) shal not alwayes continue in such ioltie, neither shal they choppe and chaunge and vse marchandize of you euer: when they are come to their highest ruffe and state-linessse, then shall they haue a sodaine downefall, and a heauie iudgement and destruction shall quicklie light vpon them. It is euen now at hande, they shall not escape. As S. Paule also saith ij. Tim. iij. Their madnesse shalbee euident to all men, that they maie be confounded. God open their eyes and graunt the grace to turne vnto hym by true and earnest repentance, and to forsake and detest these their wicked and fruitelesse Sectes: sith they here maie learne, that they are nothing els then Sectes of perdition and condemnation. For albeit there bee some, not altogether peruerter and desperatelie seduced in these Sectes; yet are the Sectes themselues nothing els then vndoubted and certein Sects of damnable perdition. After this sort therefore hath S. Peter here described the filthy and wicked life of these popish Monsters, which he sawe would come to passe, after the sincere Doctrine of the Gospel preached by þe Apostles. Now, laieth he before our eyes thre straunge and terrible examples of them whom God hath condemned and in his iustice punished: to wit, the Angelles, the whole Moorde, and the Cities of Sodome and Gornorhe.

- 4 Forif God spared not the Angels that had sinned, but cast them downe into hell and deliuered them into chaines of darknes, to be kept vnto danation:

¶ 2m. iiij

In

Vpon the second Epistle



In these words S. Peter testifieth that live in securitie, and wilfully wallowe in their wickednesse: as we see in the whiche bee the Popes sworne Suppliantes, and are decepfully drowned in the pyrgges of his filthy Tradition: so for thei looke so bigge, and haunt theselues so impudentlie, as though thei would treade whom thei liste, vnder their feete. S. Peter therefore in this place speaketh to this purpose, as if he should say: Is it not a meruailous malapert saucinesse, and presumptuous boldnesse in them, thus impudently to seke to establishe and maintaine by force and violence, their Hellish impietie? as though thei thought that GOD were in awe to theim, and that he would spare and wink at theim, who spared not the Angelles. As if he should say: The verie Sauncies and holie ones are wonderfullie afraied to see so seuer a Iudgement, namely in that, GOD spared not his excellent Spirites, and moste noble Creatures, which were farre perfecter and wiser then we, but bindyng theim in Chaines of darkenesse, caste theim into Hell. This is that seuerer Iudgement and dreadfull damnation, wherein the prisoners appointed to the same, are kept in Chaines, and can not by any means escape out of the handes of God, but are kept in holde, to bee throwne into vnter darkenesse, whereof Christ speaketh in the Gospell, Math. viij. xxij. and xxv. Here also doeth S. Peter shewe, that the devils haue not yet that punishment laied vpon them, wherevnto thei are condemned, but remaine and continue in obstinacie and desperation, looking every minute and momente for their Iudgement: even as a Felon or other malefactor that is condemned to die, and despairyng of any releasse, hardeneth hymself in obstinacie, and groweth still worse and worse. The punishment wherevnto thei are iudged, is not yet laied vpon them, but thei are kept for it, in chaires of darkenesse, that is, in their malicious obstinacie of mischief and desperation.

5 Neither hath spared the olde Worlde, but saved Noah, the eight perion, a Preacher of rightcousnes,
and

and brought in the floud vpon the worlde of the
vngodlie.



His example also is so terrible, and so full of hor-
ror, as none in the whole Scripture moze: deepng
able to appall and shake the conscience euen of him
that is right strong in Faith. For when this and
suche like places of Scripture, and suche sharpe Iudgements
of God, come into a mannes minde that is dyng, who in his
harte deeply considereth them, how can hee but tremble and
shake, and be brought to the verie bynke of desperation, vn-
lesse his Faith be moste strong and constant? For what man
is he in all the worlde, that would not be mercifulously daunted
and dismayed, to consider how that among so many thousandes
of men, as were then in the worlde, no mo should be sau'd aloue
but eight persones? And what had thei committed, thinke ye,
why God should so in his seuerer iudgemente at once destroye
the whole worlde in the floud, brounyng bothe Men and Wo-
men, Pastors, and Seruauntes, Pong and Old, Beastes of
the field, and Birdes of the Aire? Forsoothe, the cause of so ge-
nerall a destruction, was their wicked and abhominable life.
Noah was a iust manne, and a preacher of righteousnesse, he
liued five hundred yeres before the floud, what tyme GOD
commaunded hym to builde the Arke, whiche he made within
the space of an hundred yeres after, and liued alwaies an holie
and goodlie life. Wherein wee are to note and consider, what a
Crosse this good man bare, in what perilles, dangers, and ex-
tremities he was lapped, when as he must in worde and deede
openly professe hymself a Christian, that is, one that truly and
vnefeinedly trusted in God. For it is not possible, that Faith
should be Idle or lye hidde, without shewing it self openly to
the Worlde before menne, as well in preaching, as in sinceri-
tie and integritie of life. It is therefore verie like, that long be-
fore he was commaunded to builde the Arke, hee executed the
office of preaching, and franklie uttered the Worde of God,
and that not in one place and Region onely, but (doubtlesse)
in many other and sundrie Countries. And therefore it could
not

Vpon the second Epistle

not be chosen, but that he suffred many, and the same verie greiuous persecutions: In so much that S. Peter here saith) it had neede to be a speciall priuiledged protection, and a pecutiar and Spirituall assistance from aboue, that should in suche a desperate and forlorne tyme, relieue and helpe hym: els had he been quickly dispatched, and no waie could hee haue escaped death: For he that sincerely and zelously preacheth the Word of GOD, can not escape the enuious onsets, and bitter batties of many, and that of them whiche carpy the countenance of wisdom, modest life and sanctimonie. But when this holy maune had so long tyme in vaine continued his preaching to the men of that Age, and thei neuer awbit repenting their lewde life, but still contempnyng the Word of God, and growyng worse and worse: GOD saied at length, after that hee sawe their obstinate perseuerance in Sinne, My Spirite shall not alwaies strue with Manne, because he is but fleshe: his daies shalbe an hundreth and twentie yeres. Genes. xij. And a little after in the same Chapter. I will destroye from the Earth the Man, whom I haue created, from Man to Beast, to the creepng thyng, and to the Foule of the Heauen, &c. These wordes did Noah in his daiely Sermons preache, and beate into their heades: withall also buildyng the Arke, accordyng as God had commaunded hym, and that in the full space of an hundreth yeres. But thei were so senselesse of their estate, and so frozen in the dregges of their accustomed Synes, that thei laughed him to skorne, and grewe still more and more obstinate and rebellious. The Sinnes wherefore God brought the Flood vppon the World, as it appeareth in the same sixte Chapter of Genesis, were, that the Soones of God, that is, the Chisren of the holle Fathers, degenerated from the faith and knowledge wherewith thei had beene taugth, For, seing the daughters of Me that thei were faire, thei tooke them wiues of all that thei liked. Of whom were boine mighty Gyantes, and lawlesse Tytantes, whiche did all thynges accordyng to their owne lustes, and as best liked themselves. This was the cause, why God punishing their sinnes, doyned the

the whole Worlde.

6 And turned the Cities of Sodom and Gomorhe into ashes, condemned them and therein with; and made them an ensample vnto them that after should liue vngodly.



His third example is of the five Cities, whiche God destroyed, as we read Genes. xix. Ezechiel also in his xvj. Chapter, speaking hereof in the person of God; and applying his wordes by waie of vphaydyng to Hierusalem, saith. This was the iniquitie of thy Sister Sodom: Pride; fulnesse of Bread; & abundaunce of Idleness, both in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hande of the poore and needie: but shei were hautie and committed abhominacion before me, therefore I tooke them awaie, as pleased me. Sodome and Gomorha and the Territories thereof, till the Lorde destroyed them, were as Hoses wilderness Genes. xij. as the Paradise or garden of the Lorde; aboundyng and flowyng with plenty of Wine and Oyle: in thein all thynges that to the life of man were either necessarie, delightfull, or commodious, were in masse abundaunce to bee had, in so much that the common sorte beleued, that God himselfe had chosen it for his owne peculier habitation and dwelling. And therefore as Hoses in the same Chapter saith, the people thereof were wicked, and exceeding sinners against the Lorde, leadyng their liues accordyng to the leuell of their owne leude lustes. Whiche inordinate, beastly, and wicked lustes, their owne vaine curiositie, and the grente plentifull aboundaunce and Idleness whiche they enioyed, vniured and brought vnto them. As wee at this daie by experience doe see; that the wealthier Cities be, the wantoner and dissoluted life the people therein lead; but where Famine, Peiturie, or other extremities pinche, there the Citizens are nothing so muche giuen to loosenesse and Sinne. And therefore God vseth to exercise, and enure those that be his, and whom he loueth

Am. s.

with

Vpon the second Epistle

with hard cheere and slender pittauces because they make the better walke in integritie of life.

These therefore are the three dreadfull Examples, where-with **S. Peter** threateneth the vngodlie: whiche he here aptly alledgech and bringeth in, as filie hittng the persons of who he here speaketh: who (he saith) liue even as these Sodomites and Gomorheans did: whose greuous punishment is here saied before them, for their greater terrour. And therefore these thynges agree in eche respect: and verie fitly are to be applied namely and specially vnto the Pope, with his Cardinales, Bishoppes, Punks, Friers, Nunnes, and all the rest of his filchie Spiritualltie, and rumpwood retinue. For thei beynge appointed to be as it were Angels, & in the places of Apostles, truly to preache and expounde the Word of God, in steade of beynge suche Angelles (for the name Angell is a worde of Office, and not of Nature, signifying a Messenger, or an Embassadour: wherevpon all Preachers of the Truth, who are the Messengers of God, are called in the Scriptures, Mala. ij. & j. Cor. xj. by þ name of Angels) thei do carpeus headlong with themselves, into the dungeon of error, and quite reuolte from their loyall allegiaunce to God, by mere Pride and Apostacie, like these of whom **S. Peter** here speaketh: aduancynge theimselfes aboue God, and will haue no Loyde ouer them, but bee Lordes theimselfes and of them selues. And yet will thei bee called Apostolicall, hauing nothing in them, but onely a name draggng the we of the bare name and title: as here afoze in this Chapter, thei are named by the name Angelles, who properly are not so. This blasphemous route therefore of Pope and Popesynge, for that i he haue conspired with the Deuill against God, and denied hym that is their Creatour, are kepe fast fettered in Chaynes of darkenesse vnto damnation, whose Iudgement (as he saied afoze) ceaseth not, neither doorth their damnation sleepe, although as yet it bee not fullie and complety come vpon them.

Againe, thei bee herein also like vnto the old Moorde, who although thei haue the Propheies, and the Word of God preached

preached vnto them, yet did they blasphemie and (as it were) vs-
 fy hym: and as Moyses wryteth of them,ooke to theim felous
 Willies, accordyng to their owne lustes and likynges, and be-
 came mightie Tyrantes and Spantes in the earth. Gen. xj.
 Now a litle let vs see, whether all the properties and deapn-
 ges, reported by Moyses, to be in those men of the old Wold,
 bee not nowe moſte manifestly ressaunte and inuested in our
 Popishe Clergie. For thei now be greate, mightie, and dread-
 full Tyrantes, thei liue of all menne moſte delicately, moſte
 riotouſſie, and euen as thei like theimſelues, thei haue moſte
 aboundaunt ſtoze and plentye of all thynges, thei oppreſſe the
 Wold, and with their tyrannous exactions, and bloodie cru-
 elties overcrowe all Chriſtendome: and yet maiſt no manne
 ſpeake one woorde, or once open his mouth againſt them, no
 not Kynges and Princes. Againe, if thei bee diſpoſed to take
 a waie a mannes Wife, or his daughter from hym, thei maiſt
 with ſuche impunitie dooe it, that no man maiſt dare ſo muche
 as complaine of their violence: and if any doe complaine, yet
 are thei theimſelues, the iudges of the matter, and ſo it ſhall be
 euen as good to ſaie nothyng at all: for amendes her ſhall haue
 none at all. Finallie, by all the ſiſters and diſſters, by all the
 waies and meanes that thei can poſſibly bruiſe to pill and pill,
 robbe and ſpoile, rake and ſcrape, by colonge, pillage, exaction,
 tribute, commaunementes, liſences, depredations, and al
 other ſuttle trickes whatſoeuer, thei hale and pull, thei carrie
 and ſnatche vnto theim, without hie, without meaſure, with-
 out conſcience, without ſhame. And if any manne in any ſorze
 laye his lawfull claime, or touche any thyng; whiche thei pre-
 tend to be theirs, and whiche thei haue in theirs poſſeſſions,
 by and by thei hawle and barke, howle and erie againſt hym
 that the ſame thing ſo claimed is Spirituall theiſſhoode, Spi-
 rituall patrimonie, & the goods of the Church, which hath and
 ought to haue and enioye a free immunitie, ſo that no manne
 may or ought ſo much as once to touche theim. But thoſe, that
 ſincerely preach the worde of God, and charitablie reprehende
 their looſe and diſſolute life, denouncyng and declaring vnto
 them

Vpon the second Epistle

them the iudgements of God, that tarieish them suche: preachers of Justice (I saie) can they not abide to heare, but mocke and shorne them: and not onely so, but also cruellly persecute, imprison, banish, kill and murder them. But their Style and Tytle [to be called Spirituall fathers] as these others in the daies of Noah were called the Sonnes of God, thei holde fast with toothe and nalle: and needes will they rule all the roste with mere violence, force and power, euen as thei list themselves. But in the ende (notwithstanding) they shall perishe and be destroyed; whereas the true Preachers of the Word of God (who are resembled to Noah) are saued, kept and preserved.

Thirdly, as the Countrey wherein the Cities of Sodome and Gomorrah stode, flowed moste abundantly with store of all thinges that the Earth yelded, so that the Inhabitants thereof liued ydle, giuing themselves to nothing but banquetting, drunkenesse and belly cheere, without lending any reliefe to the poore: so also saresh it with the state of this pompous Clergie. The best landes, the fatteest soyles and fruitfulllest groundes in euery Countrey haue they gotten to their shares: the best Cities, the goodliest Castles, the richest reuenues, and clearest rentes haue they catched into their possidion: so that thei maie lye downe and sleepe, smolt, riddle, surphett and cramme, as long as thei list, and that of free cost: and as for ease, there is no kinde of people in the World so loptering and ydle, so slothfull and secure, as thei be, or that saresh more deliciously and daintilie without takyng any maner of paines, but liuing altogether by the sweate of other mens browes. And what commoditie is engendred of sloth and ydlenes (speccially when it is so rooted in lazinesse) wee can not bee ignoraunt. The Pope forbiddeth his forked Stallions to marie: and if any of them keepe a breedyng whore or twaine, that byngeth forth chyldren, the Bishoppes then (forsooth) because they make not saue altogether to winke at such notorious crimes, aslesse some pecuniarie punishment bypon them, and so for a litle money they are not onely for this fact released, but also permitted

permitted still to keepe their Concubines as afore: as though this were a sufficient remedie against the same of fleshy luste. I will not here speake any thyng of other their secreete, enor- mious and shamelesse pranches, whiche no modest and chaste mynded man can almoste without blusshyng so muche as ei- ther heare or name.

To conclude: wee here see how S. Peter accompyteth the state of these Schavelinges no better, nor any other wise then theirs of Sodome and Gomorhe. For such be the dispositiōs and dealinges of al þ whole rable of that viperous broode, that no good groweth from them to any: but catche and get all that thei can to themselves, vnder a pretence and colour that what soeuer is giuen to them, is giuen to God: whom they haue al- waies in their mouth, the easilier to beguile the World. And therefore as Sodome and Gomorhe were burned to Ashes, so shall they in the last daie bee consumed and brought to no- thyng.

7 And delivered iust Lot vexed with the vncleany conuersation of the wicked,



As not this a merueilous abomination in them, that they not onely committed all kindes of fornications and Adulteries, but other hor- rible factes and enormities also, whiche are not to bee named, and that openly, boldly, presump- tuously and without all shame: insomuch that thei forbare not the Angels that came to Lot: into whiche madnesse thei ranne all bealong together with one mynde and consent, both young and olde, in euery corner and quarter of the Citie. Against these their disordered dealinges the goodly man Lot did daily preache, and reprehended them, but all in vaine. The more he exhortet them to amendment and repentance, the more they hardened themselves in dissolute life and desperate demeanour, so that not findyng in them any hope of recouerie, he saue he might aswell holde his peace as speake. In the like desperate

Am. 117,

case

Vpon the second Epistle

case are we now aduaies: in whom (alas) there is no hope of better amendment: wee so turne the deafe eare to all good exhortations, and make so small account of them that giue vs good and godly counsaile out of the infallible Booke of God.

- 8 (For he beeyng righteous, and dwelling among them, in seeing and hearyng, vexed his righteous soule fro daie to daie with their vnlawfull deedes.)



eter &. Peter describeth what Crosse this holie man was forced to beare, preachyng vnto suche desperate and folye persons, and bringyng vp his daughters in the faith of Christ and nurture of the Lorde: in whiche office, vocation and trade he zelously and incessantly continuing and liuyng there among them, was saued and preserved from the destruction of the rest, by the mercifull hande of Almighty God. Finallie, &. Peter concludeth and knitteth vp the matter, that he beganne withall: namely, how that the wicked are kept vnto damnation and torment at the daie of Iudgement.

- 9 The Lorde knoweth to deliuer the godly out of tentation, and to reserue the vniust vnto the day of iudgement to be punished:



For God spared not the young world, when it was but newe, how muche more severely and sharpelie will he now punish it, seeing the Gospell hath been so long tyme manifested and so openly preached: For there was neuer aforespokene such light, as wee haue now since the propagation of the Gospell enioyed, as Christ hymself saith, Matth. xj. Woe be to thee Capernaum, which art lifted vp vnto heauen, but thou shalt be brought downe to hell: for if the greates works which haue been done in thee, had been done among them of Sodom, they had remained to this daie. But I saie vnto you, that it shall be easier for them
of

of the Lande of Sodom in the daie of Iudgement, then for thee. But these comminations and threatninges maketh a greates forte at this daie neuer awyht the warler and godlier after so muche and so long preaching and teaching. The wicked stil persist in their rebellious waies, and vicerly contemne and care not for these or any the like reprehensions.

IO And chiefly them that walke after the fleshe, in the luste of vncleanness: and despise the Gouvernemente: whiche are presumptuous, and stande in their owne conceit, and feare not to speake euill of them that are in dignitie.

II Whereas the Angells whiche are greater bothe in power and might, giue not railyng Iudgemente against them before the Lorde.



D walke after the fleshe in the lustes of vncleanness, is to liue like vnto Beasts accor- dyng to the liking of sensuall appetite, and selfwill. As in the Popes Decretalles, wee see how all thynges be set downe, as it pleaseth the Pope to appointe: eche thing must souerayn and bee determinable by the doome of his lawlesse Tyrannie: he and his adherentes haue wratched, wrested, and expounded all thynges, as beste pleased theimselfes. And now late of all thei haue boldly pronounced; that the holie See of Roome can not erre. Not one of theim caught any thyng of Faith or Charitie, but of dreames and dotages of their owne vainelesse deuising.

By Gouvernemente and Dignitie, he meaneth Kynges, Princes, Lordes, and all Ciuile Magistrates, not the Pope with his Cardinalls and Bishoppes, who ought to bee nothing lesse then Lordes: For Christe in the newe Testament appointed none to be any other wise then Seruaunt, & that one Christian should serue and helpe to benefite an other, and one to reuerence and honour an other. Sainte Peters mean- yng

Vpon the second Epistle

nyng therefore, is, that thei whiche boaste themselves to be of Christ, should in all thynges be subiecte and obedient to the Ciuile and externall Magistrate; and should stande in awe of the power of the Swearde, beeyng Gods Institution and Ordinance. Contrarie thereto, these Schauelnynges in eche respecte dooe deale: who haue exempted themselves from their due obedience to Ciuile Magistrates, and affirmed themselves not to be subiect vnto them: yea, thei haue not onely exempted themselves from this their due subiection, but also refused obedience vnto the Magistrate, but thei also moste arrogantly haue made the Ciuile Magistracie subiect vnto the, and haue trodden it vnder foote: And withall moste impudently suffer themselves to be called Lordes, ouer Kynge and Princes. The Pope also calleth himselfe Lord bothe of Heauen and Earth, and braggeth that hee hath in his handes bothe the Swearde, the Spiritual and the Temporal, & that euery one should fall doune before hym, and kisse his seete. Also such as Peter, Thei feare not to speake euill of them that bee in dignitie. For it hath hitherto been but a playng matter, and a trick of small regarde with the Pope, at his pleasure to curse Kynge and Princes, and to depose them from their Regall trounes and auctorities. And this to all Popes hath been a thing vsual and famillier, to set Princes together by the eares, and to sowe inextricable discorde, warre, and dissension betwene them.

If any resisteth or withstoode this bloudie Tyrannie of theirs, hym thei shortly suppressed and snatched vp: not as one that had committed any thyng repugnant to or contrarie to Christian Charitie, but as a rebellious Childe, and wicked member, that would not enbrasse & subiect himselfe to the See of Rome, and kisse the seete of that Italian Priest the Pope: whose power thei affirme to be farre to surmounte and exceed the dignitie of any earthly King or Ciuile Magistrate, as the Sunne in brightnesse of light exceedeth the Moone, and as farre as the Heauens higher then the Earth. Beholde how egregiously thei blaspheme, and how impiouslie thei lye. For thei

thei which ought to be subiect, and to shew all humble obedience unto Kinges & Magistrates, to be the and to praye for them (as Christ shewed obedience to Pilate, and payed Tribute unto Caesar) shake of the yoke of all obedience, and bee the anchours and Seedemen of al Obstinacie, Rebellion, Contempt, and Disorder. Thei ought at the hearing of any euill spoken against Princes and Magistrates, beyng placed in soueraigne dignitie, to tremble: But thei are so shamelesse, so gracelesse, so void of reuerent awe and due full feare, that thei moste sawtily and malapertlie theiueselues without all feare, blaspheime and speake euill of theim. Not waighyng and considering, that if the Angels whiche be of greete power and might, can not abide the heauie iudgement of GOD against theim, how muche lesse then shall thei (wretched carities) be able to abide it, whiche boldly reuile and blasphemously speake euill against them.

12 But these, as brute beastes, led with sensualitie and made to bee taken and destroyed, speake euill of those thynges whiche thei know not, and shall perishe through their owne corruption.

13 And shall receiue the wages of vnrightrousnesse,



He calleth them hynde and vnrasonable Beastes, for that thei haue nothyn in them any sparke of the spirite of God, neither giue themselues to that spirituall function wherunto they are charged, but liue like filthie Swine, altogether swallowed vp in the beastly pleasures of the flesh. Wherreas he saith, Thei are made to bee taken and destroyed, it maye bee vnderstoode after two sortes: either that they doe deuoure and destroye that whiche they haue taken as the manner of Lyons, Beares, Hawkes, Eagles and Vultures is: (for after the manner of these Beastes, doo our Prelates take and catche to themselues all wealth, honour, promotion, dignitie and preeminence that possible they can) Or els because

Do, I,

thei

Vpon the second Epistle

thei shalbe taken, caught, ensnared and made a praise to others, to bee destroyed, and (as it were) slaughtered in iudgement at the last daie.

13 As they which count it pleasure to liue deliciously for a season,



Behold how angrie S. Peter sheweth hymself to be with these Belly gods. They thinke, if thei maie liue delicately & vgly, and face deliciouſlie, that then they are througħly happie, and haue ragħt to the tippe of their wiſhed desires. This evidently appeareth in their owne Decretalles, wherein they pronounce bym the Sonne of the Deuill and an accursed person, that dare presume to touch or meddle with their pompous wealth and reuel, or with their pampered paunches and embolned bellies. Wherein they so manifestly, so apparauntly, and in so good earnest handle the cause of their Belly, that thei can not themselves denye, but that their whole Canons and Lawes, and the whole pollicie of their Church is purposetie directed to this ende, that they maie lyue lasing in ease and carelessse securitie, and liue in most abundant stoare of all thinges without either paine or labour, making others to labour in the meane while for them. And ocher cause to pretende and alledge for themselves why thei would thus be, & haue they none, saying that (for looth) thei must chaunt, sing and pipe God a daunce in the Church, or pray. But God hath expressely commaunded all men without exception, that thei should eate their brade in the sweate of their owne browes, and vpon euery one hath be laded some burdens and troublesome charges to exercise themselves in from which, these our Lordly Rab- bines and Pastors would bee exempted, and by their good willes would do nothing but leane on their pillows. And this is the greatest blindnesse and blockishnes that can be, to think that suche a beastly and shamefull life, is eicher good or wor- thy to be any waie dignified or had in any honoꝝ or estimatiō.

13 Spottes

13 Spottes thei are, and blottes,



These Dones and Humblebees in their own conceites thinke themselves the Pillers and Dynames of the Church, euen as the Sunne and the Moone are the beautie and ornaments of the Heauen: they looke to bee accounted of all others the best, the noblest and the excellentest: euen as in the Moyle, Golde and precious Stones are of greatest price and highest estimation. But S. Peter here in plaine tearmes calleth them foule Spottes, filthie Blottes and opprobrious Staines. For a true and sincere Christian life consisteth wholly in Faith, it serueth all men by loue, and beareth his Crosse. This is the right colour and true beautie of the Christian Church: this is her ornament, glorie & renowne. But these Schauelings in steepe of bearyng the Crosse haue betaken themselves to pleasures in steepe of loue to their Neighbours, thei haue chosen belcherie, nyrenesse, loue of themselves, desire of self gaine and private commoditie: rakyng all thinges to themselves, and not hauyng any regard or remorde to serue any other bodie turne or benefite. And as for Faith, thei knowe thereof nothing at all. They are therefore nothyng but Spottes and Blottes, of whom the Church hath iust cause to bee ashamed: because for their sakes she is euil spoken of, and pitifully slandered. Hereby me thinkes these our spirituall Tyauntes are wel enough distoner'd, and sufficiently repproued.

13 Delytyng themselves in their deceiuynges, in feasting with you,



Of relief and sustentation whiche at the first was given by charitable & deuout persons, of mere Christian loue, to bee as publique Almes, for the use of poore Widowes, fatherlesse, and other seerle poore members of Christ, because there might bee no Beggars or any distressed with pinching penurie: all this whatsoeuer being giuen to this
Do. 13 good

34 Vpon the second Epistle

good ende, hath beene since, converted into Freeries and Do-
nasteries: so that now these Schauelings doe there with crāme
and pamper theirowne paunches, and fare moste deliciouslie
and liue moste pleasurable: finally thei affirme that all these
doe properly appertaine vnto them, and that it is lawfull for
no mā to reprehend or finde fault with them for it. But doubt-
lesse, the holie Ghost can not adoe, that the true Ministers of
the Church should liue in delicacie and plemesse, vppon the
gaine of other mens labours, or vpon that which is appointed
for the sustentation, succour and reliefe of the poore, needie,
impotent, and weaklyng.

14 Hauyng eyes full of adulterie,

FOR this vicious effect can not choosethat needes
followe, when the bodie is inglutiouslie crammed
and gurmardized with excesse of meates & drinks,
and walloweth in ease and slothfull plemesse. But
what is the cause, that S. Peter here saith not, that they bee
Adulterours, but that thei haue eyes full of Adulterie. True-
lie, his very meaning is this: All their cogitations & thoughtes
are still vpon Whoredom & Adulteries: their fleshy desires and
inordinate lustes can neuer with the dissolute haunt of sinne be
satisfied, gluttoned or wearied. And the cause is, for that thei are
continually giuen to rpot, and bellicheere. To conclude, they
boldly and impunely doe what thei list.

14 And that can not cease to sinne,

FOR the Pope hath commaunded, that neither Prince
nor other civill Magistrate presume to controll or
chastise that Romische Clergie: whiche if thei should
attempt to dooe, be straightwaies excommunicated them.
The censure ouer them, must bee referred to thei Ordinaries
and Bishoppes: who beeyng letwde and vicious themselves,
looke at the shamelesse and enomyous villanies of others.

In

In this sorte therefore, they haue exempted themselves from vnder the power of the temporall Sword, so that no man dare withstande or againsaie their lawlesse lustes and wicked proceedinges: thei liue so abhominablie, and so sensually, euen as the Gyantes and Tyrauntes did befoze the Flood.

14 Beguilyng vnstable soules:



Vnder this gale & glorious shewe, which they pretende in the whole course of their wicked life (as mumbling of Masses, chattering and chaunting, prayng and singing) thei beguile and deceiue light and vnstable soules, that want Faith. And herehence it grew that all men so desired and wished to become Priestes, because they liked that state better then any other: and therefore the greatest sorte of Parents thought themselves happye, if they could traîne and byng vp their children to that profession: so that within a while this opinion was commonly receiued, that in this kinde of life, there wanted nothyng (nay rather all thinges moste plentifully abounded) whereby they might bothe in this present Worlde liue commodiously and delicately: and againe, because thereby thei were fully perswaded in their consciences that this was the very right high waie and straight passage vnto Heuen.

But he that would somewhat more neerely sife the truth and sounde the depth of this matter, shall (doubtlesse) finde, that therein they sought none other thyng, but how to fill the belly with delicious fare, and pamper this filthie lacke of the fleshe with excessiue superfluitie and choyle of the daintiest Junkettes.

14 They haue hartes exercised with couetousnesse.



AND this vice also is among these Shau-tynges so grossely and openly committed, that none almost euen of the bluntest wize of the common people, but
Do. iij. both

Vpon the second Epistle

both seeth and complaineth of it. He doeth not saie (They are covetous) but they haue a harte exercised with couetousnes, and through practise notablie enured and acquainted therewith. Whiche hereby evidently appeareth, in that they haue deuised suche a number of suttile shiftes and craftie conueighances, Whereby they haue catched and gotten into their handes the wealsh and richesse almost of the whole Worlde. And whatsoeuer this rable of Honsters goeth aboute or taketh in hande, is nothing els but cursed conetpse: it must bring money to their purses, or els thei will not meddle with it. But their liues, behauiours, dealinges, practises and conuersations be so generally to all the Worlde manifested, and euery man seeth them so readily bent to the fingerpng of money, and to catche by hooke or crooke, all that cometh to hande, that S. Peter needeth not to feare to bee herein reprooued, as though he had herein spoken vnturly of them.

14 Thei are cursed children,

IN this Trope or figure of the Hebrewetongue, is asmuche meant as if he had saied, They bee accursed persons, and vnder the malediction of God: so that with God they haue no lope, nor consolation, but become euery daie worse and worse, and encrease daillie in blasphemie and hatred of God, bringyng the full measure of Gods heauie wrath vpon them. These be very sharpe and terrible saynges. Whereby wee learne that it is moze then high tyme for them to be dispatched out of this horrible and execrable life. For if they bee tearmed and called by this most dreadfull title of the children of curse, their case is most miserable. When the high Paier of GOD doeth thus greuously reprove, curse and condemne, who is he that is able to abide it?

15 Whiche forsakyng the right waie, haue gone astraye,

They

They ought to preache and teache the right waie, how wee should by faith cleaue vnto Christe, and by hym haue access vnto God: how by loue we are to beyn and further our Neighbour, and afterwarde how to beare the Crosse, and patiently suffer whatsoeuer for this cause is layed vpon vs: whereas they teach nothing els, but bryn and enioyne vs to gadde on Pilgrimage to this place and to that place, to professe our selues Bishops & to weare a Friers Weede: to become sacrificyng Priests, to build Churches, & to giue exhibition and maintenaunce for Pastors &c. By these meanes they drawe men from Faith, to Worke of their owne appoyntment, no maner of way auailable or profitable to our Neighbour.

15 Following the waie of Balaam, the sonne of Bosor, whiche loued the wages of vnrighteousnesse.

16 But he was rebuked for his iniquitie: for the dūme Asse speakyng with mannes voyce, forbadde the foolishnesse of the Prophete.



His storie is taken out of the xxij. xxiiij. & xxiiij. Chapters of the Booke of Numbers. Wherein is mentioned how the children of Israell coming out of Egypt, into the lande of the Moabites, Balak the King thereof sent messengers into Syria to Balaam, to request hym to come and curse the people of Israell, whereby hee might bee able to smite them with the sword, and drive them out of his lande. Then came GOD vnto Balaam, and commaunded hym, not to curse the people: wherbypon Balaam sent a while the Kinges messengers, and denied to goe with them. But when the King sente to hym the seconde tyme, and promised to giue hym greate wealth, and to promote hym to greate honour, God permitted the Prophete to goe with them, but withall he commaunded hym to speake nothyng, but what he should direct and appoint him to speake. Then saddled he his Asse and went. And

Vpon the second Epistle

in the waie, the Angell of the Lorde stood against hym, with a naked Swoorde in his hande, whiche when the Ass eiespied, she turned out of the waie, so that Balaam smote her, to turne her into the waie againe. Then the Angell of the Lorde wente further and stood in a narrowe place, where was no waie to turne, either to the right hande, or to the lefte: where the Ass seeing the Angell, with his Swoorde still drawen, thruste her self vnto the wall, and dashed Balaams foote against it: where vpon he smote her againe. And at last, she laye downe vnder Balaam: Wherefore Balaam was verie wrothe, and in a greater rage cudgelled his Ass with his staffe. Then God opened the mouthe of the Ass, that he spake in the voice of a manne, and said: what haue I dooen vnto thee, that thou thus beatest and boundest me? To whom Balaam answered: If I had a sword in myne hande, I would surely kill thee. The Ass saied againe to her Maister, am not I thyne Ass, whiche thou hast ridden vpon, since the firste tyme vntill this daie? Was I euer wont to doe thus vnto thee before? Then the Lorde opened the eyes of Balaam, that he sawe the Angell of GOD, standing afore hym in the waie, with a naked Swoorde in his hande: Where with he being greatly agast, would haue gone backe againe; but the Angell commaunded hym to goe forwarde; but with all, he gaue hym in charge, that hee should saie nothing, but that whiche he should appointe and tell hym. So when Balaam was come to King Balak, the King brought hym into an high place, from whence he might descie, and take a full viewe and sight of the whole people of Israel. In which place, Balaam commaunded seuen Altars to bee made, and sacrifice for euery Altar. Then wente he to aske counsell of the Lorde what he should speake; to whom the Lorde deliuered his wordes: so that he in excellencie of Parables and Sentences, in neede of curfing, did blesse the people of Israel, and that thre tymes one after another. Then the King being exceedingly angrie, saied: I sent for thee to curse myne enemies, and behold, thou hast blessed them now three tymes. I thought to haue promoted thee vnto honour, but loe, the Lorde hath kept

kept thee backe from honor. To whom Balaam answering, saied: Told I thee not by thy messengers, which thou sentest vnto mee, that if thou wouldest giue me thy house full of siluer & gold, I could speake none other thyng, then what God should put in my mouth? For withstanding, after ward Balaam gaue counsell to Balak, how hee should deale with the people of Israel, to make them to spine against their God, because he himself was neither able to curse them, neither the King by force able to vanquish and subdue them. Then the King erected and sett vp an Idoll, whiche had to name Baal Ideo, and caused the chiefest of the Moabitish women, and the daughters of the Princes and Nobles, to draw and allure the people of Israel to the sacrifice of their Gods: who anone with them beganne to commit Idolatrie, to banquet, to feaste, pea, to commit whoredome with them. Wherefoze the Lorde being angrie, commaunded that all the chief heades of the people should be hanged vp in the Sunne, that the indignation of the Lordes whiche might bee turned from Israel: and there died in one daie of the people xliiii. thousande persones. All this mischief was brought in among them, by Balaam, for the couetousnesse of money.

Of this matter doeth Saint Peter now here speake, meaning that our greased Popelynges and Romishe rouse, with all their Disciples, Favourers, Abettors, and Seccaries, are the verie children of this Balaam. For as hee gaue pestilente counsell to erecte and set vp an Idoll to be worshipped, where by the Israelites being drawn to spine, prouoked the vengeance and wrath of God against them, and were greeduously punished for the same, with the death of so many thousandes: euen so in like maner our Bishoppes Balaamites haue erected an Idoll, vnder the name of God, to witte their owne peruilous Traditions and somlie Inuentions, Doctrines of Heretics and Iustifying Monkes, excluding and banishing Father and thus they steale awaie mennes consciences, and cause them to leaue the true and liuing God, and to goe a whooping vnto strange Idolles. Whiche rebellion and disobedience hath so

Vpon the second Epistle

promoued Gods wrath and indignation, that he hath long punished the woꝛlde with such greate blindness and obstinacie, wherein many a Soule hath perished. For al whiche miseries and mischieues, we make thanke none but these our graunde Spirituall L. q. d. y. n. g. s.

Saincte Peter therefore peculiarly and properly resembled and likeneth these false Teachers, vnto Balaam the Prophete: because like as he, so dooeth they, for money sake, bying in masse abhominable Idolatrie, and destroye infinite numbers of Soules. The verie interpretation of the name of this Prophete, maketh somewhat to the better opening of this matter. For Bileam or Balaam, in the Hebrue tongue signifieth a Deuourer, or a Sweetestake, or a Supper by, who with open mouth deuoureth and gulleth vp all that cometh to hand. He had this beastly and obious name therefore giue vnto hym, because he allured, and was the cause that so many men sinned, whereby they were brought to their deathes and destruction. Suche manner of fellows be our Balaamites, the Clergie of the Romishe Synagogue now a daies, who with their wide open throates, are verie Deuilles, deuouring and swallowyng by innumerable Soules. The Sirname of this Prophete, is the Sonne of Bosor, whiche signifieth Fleshe, or as Poles calleth hym Beoz, whiche signifieth Fooleshe. So likewise are our Holleshorne Doltes, blinde, blockish and foolish: who seeking to beare rule ouer others, haue moſte neede themselves to be ruled and gouerned by others. For such be the menne, that are begotten of Fleshe: the Spirite begetteth other manner of persones. Thus hath God in his Scriptures very properly and apely tearmed, and sette them out in liuely colours: namely, thereby to giue vs to vnderstande and knowe, what is to bee thought of them.

The Ass being a summe beaste, and natelly accustomed to the yoke and burden, signifieth the People, whiche must be content bothe to bee afflicted, bydeled, sabled, ridden vpon, and to goe whiche waie they are bidden. And as this Ass was violently dealt withall, and greuously beaten, when he went out of

of the waile, and was forced to goe still forwarde, till she came into such a strait Lane, where she could not any waile either starte aside for the narrowness of the place, nor goe on, for the Angell that withstood and stopped her, so that she was driven to fall downe: So, the poore people, so often as shet feelee their selues to be hardly dealt withall, and to be caried into vniuersall errours, and faine would goe aside out of that wicked waie, straighwaies these seducyng Balaamites were readie with rigour and violence, to bypnyng them into their erryng waie againe, and therein compelled and enforced them to goe, till it pleased God to open our mouthes, and to putte his Wordes therein, so that now (his name be praised) even young children doe take of it. Whereby their brainische madnesse, is so notoriously detected, that though they be made shamelesse and impudent, yet can they not chooseth, but blasse thereat.

And here, out of this place, our Balaamites made very fitly be answered, when as they bragge and crye out, according to their wonted order, that it is not meete for the Laie people (as they call they) to read the Scriptures, nor to talke and conferre of the same one with another: but rather to giue eare and hearken what the Generall Councelles doe decree: and what sooner they agree vpon, that onely to bee beleued and embraced. Maie we not thus answer them: That GOD speaking by a poore Ase, repproued the Prophete whiche satte on her backe, of madnesse. They now therefore being insatuated, and their harte whollie possessed with couetousnesse, what maruile is it, though God stirre by the poore common people, to declare and shewe forth his truth, whom they hitherto haue surcharged with heauie burdens, and driven whiche waie they list, none otherwise then a dumpe like Ase, carrying onely to carrie burdens. This is therefore the similitude that saint Peter sheweth betwene Balaam, and our blinde Popish Guides.

17 These are Welles without water, and Cloudes carried about with a tempest,

Ep. ij. Salomon

Vpon the second Epistle



Diomon in the xxv. of his Proverbs useth a similitude, saying: A manne that boasteth of false liberalitie, is like Cloudes and Winde without Raine. So saith saint Peter here in this place: Thei are Welles without water, and Cloudes caried about with a tempest, that is: they boaste of great things, but thei performe nothing: thei are like Welles that are stopp'd and dried up, hauing in them no water at all, and yet thei beare thei-m-selues highly vpon that title, and boaste thei-m-selues to bee the true Welles. But the Scripture calleth thei-m, Welles, whiche teache, and from whom doeth flowe and issue good and wholesome doctrine, where-with the Soules of men maie be refreshed. This is the office that thei ought to doe, and for this are thei appointed. But alas, saying onely the name, there is no suche thyng in thei-m: as likewise thei call thei-m-selues Shepheardes, whereas in verie deede thei be rather rauening Wolves.

Againe, thei be as Cloudes, caried hither and thither with the winde: Not as the chicke and blacke Cloudes, that destill and droppe doune Raine vpon the earth: but as the thinne and light fleetyng Cloudes in the Aire, whiche are tossed and caried about hither and thither, out of whom there cometh no Raine at all. Euen so likewise doe these Pomptous Prelates: haunt and bragge, and carie lofty and high countenaunces in the Church, seducyng the world with thei-owne vaine gawes and Traditions: beynge like to light wind-tossed Cloudes, and are contented to swaie whiche waie soeuer Sathan listeth to carie thei-m, and to preache what soeuer maie be to his likyng: but not so much as one Woode of the pure and sincere Gospell of God. Which Gospell is Woode, because none preacheth but thei that be true Preachers and Teachers, therefore are thei in the v. of Esai: and other places of the Scriptures termed Cloudes, because thei doe destill and lette fall into the hartes of thei-Auditores; the swete and comfortable Mateer of Gods trueth and mercie.

17 To whom the blacke darknesse is reserved for ever.

Thei

They liue now euen at their owne pleasures: euery thing accordyng to their owne hartes desires prospereth and hath good successe: but there is a glommie daie toward them, there shall come vpon them euerlastyng darkenesse, although now thei neither beleue it nor fele it.

- 18 For in speakyng swelling wordes of vanitie, they beguile with wantonnes through the lusses of the fleshe, them that were cleane escaped from them whiche are wrapped in error.



Mye aske, how they can bee called Welles without water and Cloudes without raine, such thei preache very much euery where. So Peter maketh you this answer: thei preache (indeede) and rayue enough and enough: but their preachynges are nothyng els then swelling and proude wordes, wherewith they accloye and fill the eares of the poore scellie people, whom thei make to beleue, that what thei speake, is right good and Catholike, whereas inderde there is nothyng more vaine, sonde, and childishe. Thus are our lubberly Pontikes wont with braue and plausible wordes, to boaste and vaunt their Obedience, Pouertie, and Chastite, and all because thei would be thought of the common people, to be of all wiene the holiest: whereas all their doings and preachynges, are nothyng but mere sugglynges, decretes, and collusions, not haupyng in them, either of a true Charitie. And so is also this lostie vaine bragge of theirs, that the state and office of a Bisshope, is an estate of perfection: whereas thei that bee in that mistred state, dooe nothyng but womponssly iete the streates, awaited vpon with a greaie retinue of Seruautes and Seruauntes, as though they were great Lordes: and fare like Princies, ryding vpon braue hoxes like gallant Cavaliers: Without any regard had to their Pastoral charge, sauyng that now and then thei hallowe a Church, or consecrate an Altar, or Baptize Welles: for with these and luche like swelling and vaine wordes, their whole Pontificall Law is full thwacke & pestered.

Vpon the second Epistle

18 Their beguile with wantonnesse through the lusses of the Fleſhe, them that were cleane escaped from them whiche are wrapp'd in errour.

The dylite of these Welles and these Teachers is none other, but to entangle and catche in their snares, the se-
le Soules that had scarcely afore escaped. As naturallie, children lately Baptized, and newly recruited into the Church, and washed from their synnes, deliuered from Adam, and en-
grafted into Christ: them I saie, warpyng somewhat bigge, thei
lye in awaite to ensnare, and drawe into errour. Whom thei
ought rather to teache the principles and growndes of Faith
and Charitie, and how to beare the Crosse of Christ: but alas
thei instill nothyng into their tender myndes, but praises of
their Hypocriticall Woorke: whereby it cometh to passe,
that thei (seele younglynge) are caried backe againe into er-
rour, although afore thei had escaped out thence. But how doe
thei thus beguile men with wantonnesse, to the lusses of the
Fleſhe, and what baites dooe thei vse for the accomplishynge
thereof? Forsooth, these holie Priestes, Monkes, & nuns, & o-
thers, and the reste of those marked mates dooe saie and teache
theim, that thei ought not to Marie, but to liue in single life,
vnto the whiche thei binde theim faste by Towres and precep-
tes: In whiche dooynge thei clogge and beguile menne, in cen-
synge and incipynge theim to the lusses of the Fleſhe: wherein
thei suffer theim miserably to burne, without allowynge vnto
theim that lawfull remedie, whiche God hath ordeined. Here
wee see that S. Peter speaketh of none other, but of those false
Teachers and Buffardly guides whiche are aſore, and raigne
like Princes in the Church of God, ouer poore Baptized and
beleeyving Christians.

19 Promissynge vnto them libertie, and are themselves
the seruantes of corruption: for of whom soeuer
a manne is ouercome, euen vnto the same is hee in
bondage.

Thel

Het extoll, praise, and vaunte their holie Orders, their religious Sectes, and shewelke professions: in- to the whiche, who soeuer doeth enter, shall bee saued, as that moste Swinish and impudent Dominicane Thomas writeth: affirming that who soeuer professeth hymselfe as a Pope is in that state of perfection wherein he was at the tyme, whe he was at the Baptized, and that thereby he shall assuredly merite the toyces of heauen, and haue full remission of his Sin- nes, through his owne Worke. These and suche like blasphe- mies of them, must wee listen and giue eare vnto: heeving no- thing at all ashamed, to compare their owne vicioussnes and crisyng toyces, vnto Faith and Baptisme, whiche bee Gods owne proper Worke and instruction: Altho haueing the Spirit of GOD in hym, and hearing these horrible blas- phemies, can suffer them and holde his peace. Now, these and suche like madde conclusions, and impious Sentences, our Spokes doe traine by Pouch withall. Finallie, whiche is not the least point to be meruailed at, them that be the aucthours of these detestable errors, thei haue canonized and Saincted: wheras them that bee the true Sainctes in deede, thei haue murdered and burnt to ashes.

- 20 For if they, after they haue escaped from the filthi- nesse of the worlde, through the knowledge of the Lorde, and of the Sauour Iesus Christe, are yet en- tangled againe therein; and ouersome, the larger ende is worse with them then the beginnyng.

Since Peter heere proueth and sheweth reasons why thei be the seruantes of corruption. For to knowe Christe thoughtfully and truly, is to knowe whome he is now, our onely Sauour and Redem- mer, whome his precious merite goodnesse and grace hath freely pardoned and forgiven our Sinnes. Through this know- ledge wee escape iniquitie, and are deliuered from the filthi- nesse of the worlde. Whiche corruption and filth they haueing

Vpon the second Epistle

in their baptisme, renounced and put of: are againe myered
and charynge (belong into the same, whensoever they departe
and start from Faith, to trust in their owne vile Works. For,
where Faith faileth and is absent, there is not the Spirit pre-
sent: and where the Spirit is wantynge, there is nothing but
fleshe, and there can no cleannesse be. And after this sort, hath
it fallen out hitherto in the Church: Rome at the first heark-
ned vnto, & embraced the pure Gospell: but after ward it declin-
ed and turned aside into hyppathies of mans deuilled doctrines,
so that now it swarmeth with al manner of abominations, and
is become the common Synke of all blasphemous impietie.
The latter ende thereof is therefore farre worse then the be-
gynnyng, because they are now become farre more desperate
and forsorne Schismes, then euer they were, before they heard
the Word of God.

21 For it had been better for them, not to haue kno-
wen the waye of righteousness, then after they
haue knowen it, to turne from the holy Com-
mandement given vnto them.

22 But it is come vnto them, accordyng to the true
prouerbe, The dogge is returned to his owne vo-
mit: and, The sowe that was washed, to the wallow-
yng in the myer.

This Prouerbe hath S. Peter taken out of
the Booke of the Prouerbes, where Solo-
mon hath these words: As the dogge turneth
again to his owne vomit: so a foole tur-
neth to his foolishnes. Pro. xviij. And so
also by the same writer in the second Epistle: they
haue forsaken all righteousness, and wish to cleane from their
filthy life, and haue betaken theyr selves to vniuersall conuersation
of fleshe and Chatterie, and their consciences be fall backe into inue-
lides, and a trust in their owne Works: the principall cause
whereof is this: because they haue despised the Word of God.

This

This place therefore ought not to be applyed to
 Elukes: as these Apostles were men to bee, who after a true
 confession and thurst, were wont thus to enioyne the whole
 confession they heard: Take heede that from henceforth thou
 bee chaste, milde, gentle, patient &c. But they ought rather thus
 to instruct and teache them: If thou haue a desire to become
 vertuous and godly, humbly praye vnto GOD by hartie and
 earnest prayer, that it would please hym to graunte vnto thee a
 true and sincere faith: and thence begiue to liue goodlie, and
 to departe from wickednesse and impietie. For when thou art
 possessed of a true & sincere faith, good Elukes will straight-
 waies followe and thine from it: then shalt thou liue chaste and
 pure: other remedie is there none to ridde thee from the dam-
 ger of synne. For although for a while thou mayest lye and
 restrain wickednesse and impietie in thyne hart, yet will it
 burst out in open flames at length.

This is now the seconde Chapter of this his seconde Epi-
 stle, wherein the Apostle hath exhorted and exhorted vs,
 what manner of Teachers & false Seducers should afterwarde
 come among vs, and mischiefe will doe vs. We can pretend
 no excuse, but that we haue had sufficient warning aforehand,
 howbeit wee haue little regarded it: and therefore our fault is
 the greater in that wee haue thus lightly esteemed the Gos-
 pell, and swerued from the sweete doctrine comprized in the
 same: whereby wee haue through our lewde liues prouoked
 the heauier wrath of God against vs. Wee are all not unwill-
 yng to heare the Pope with his lubberly Drones to bee in-
 ueighed againste, and for their monstrous marchandise of
 Christian Soules to bee condignely counted and reposed:
 but few of vs taketh any occasion thereby to amende his owne
 life, or to reforme his former conuersation. For it is no try-
 ping matter, or laughing toye, but a serious case and of
 greate importaunce, & suche whereat our hartes ought to tre-
 ble and quake for feare. These thinges therefore are most ear-
 nestly, and diligently to be bothe spoken and heard: and God is
 moste humbly to bee desired and prayed vnto, to turne his bea-

Vpon the second Epistle

we wrath and plague from vs. For this calamitie and wretchednesse cometh not vpon vs by chaunce or blinde fortune, but it is sent vnto vs from God, as a plague for our wickednesse and impietie, as S. Paule witnesseth ij. Thes. ij. Because (saith he) they receiued not the Loue of the truth, that they might bee saued, therefore shall God sende them strong delusion, that they should beleue lyes. For if this punishment and reuenge of God had extended no further, but to the perishing onely of those false, counterfite, and seducing Teachers themselves, it might haue seemed very tollerable: but now they hauing mastered and ouerruled the whole Church at their own pleasures, they haue caried with them to hell whole multitudes of people, that haue bene bewitched and enchaunted with their spirituall sorceries. There is no remedie therefore for vs to recture this mischiefe, but to prostrate our selues before the mercie seate of almightie God, in all feare and humilitie, mooste penitently confessing our faultes, and supplicantly imploping his diuine grace and assistance, that he might please him to vouchsafe to remoue and take away this plague from vs. It is earnest and hartie prayer, wherewith we must impugne and withstande these false and deceitfull Teachers: for Soothan our Adversarie the Deuill will not bee dyuined away with any other weapons.



The



The third Chapter.



His seconde Epistle I now write vnto you, beloved, wherewith I stirre vp, and wane your pure myndes,

2 To call to remembrance the wordes, whiche were told before of the holie Prophetes, and also the commaundement of vs the Apostles of the Lorde

and Sauour.

3 This firste vnderstande, that there shall come in the laste daies, mockers, whiche will walke after their lustes,

4 And saie, Where is the promes of his comming? for since the Fathers died, all thynges continue alike from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this thei willyngly knowe not, that the Heauens were of olde, and the Earth that was of the water and by the water, by the woorde of God.

6 Wherefore the worlde that then was, perished, overflowed with the water.

7 But the Heauens and Earth, whiche are now, are kepte by the same Woorde in store, and reserved vnto fire against the daie of Iudgemente, and of the destruction of vngodlie men.

8 Dearly beloved, bee not ignoraunt of this one thyng, that one daie is with the Lorde as a thousand yeres, and a thousand yeres, as one daie.

9 The Lorde is not slacke concerning his promise (as some men count slackenesse) but is pacient toward vs, and would haue no man to perishe, but would all men to come to repentance.

10 But the daie of the Lorde will come as a Thief in the

Qq.ij.

nighte,

Vpon the second Epistle

night, in the which the Heauens shall passe awaie with a noyle, and the Elementes shall melte with heate, and the Earth with the woorkes, that are therein, shalbe burnt vp.

11 Seeyng therefore that all these thinges must bee dissolved, what maner persones ought ye to bee in holie conuersation and godlinesse:

12 Looking for, and hasting vnto the commyng of the daie of God, by the which the Heauens beeyng on fire, shal be dissolved, and the Elementes shall melt with heate?

13 But we looke for newe Heauens, and a newe Earth, according to his promise, wherein dwelleth right cōfesse.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seying that ye looke for suche thinges, bee diligent that ye mai be founde of hym in peace, without spot and blamelesse.

15 And suppose that the long suffering of our Lorde is saluation, euen as our beloved brother Paule, according to the wisdom given vnto hym wrote to you,

16 As one, that in all his Epistles speaketh of these thinges: among the which some thynges are harde to bee vnderstande, which thei that are vnlearned and vnstable, pervert, as thei doe also other Scriptures vnto their owne destruction.

17 Ye therefore beloved, seying ye knowe these thynges before, beware lest ye be also plucked awaie with the error of the wicked, and fall from your owne steadfastnesse.

18 But growe in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Sauour Iesus Christ: to hym bee glorie both now and for euermore. Amen.



1 This second Epistle I now write vnto you, beloved,
wherewith I stirre vp and wame your pure mindes,
2 To call to remembraunce the wordes, which were
tolde before of the holy Prophets, and also the com-
mandement of vs the Apostles of the Lorde and
Saviour.



In this Chapter wee are admonished to
bee like a readiness and every minute of
an hower to looke for the last daye. And
first **S. Peter** declareth vnto them how
that he hath not written this Epistle to
theim purposely and with intent to laye
downe vnto them the foundation of faith
(for that had he lated downe very substantially, effectually and
sufficiently afore) but to excite and stirre them vp, and to ad-
monishe and put them in remembraunce that thei forgett not
those thinges whiche thei had afore heard and receiued, but ra-
ther that thei should perseuere in that sinceritie of mynde and
vnderstandyng, whiche was requisite, fite, experiente and
appertinent vnto true Christianitie. For the office and duetie
of all true Preachers is, not onely to teache, but also continu-
ally to admonishe and exhort. Because so long as wee bee clad
with this fleshe and blood, wee haue greete neede to haue the
Woide of God to dwell plentifully in vs, & to raygne & beare
fourraigne authoritie in vs: whereby wee maye resist the mo-
tions, suggestions, delites and concupiscences of the fleshe,
and with faithfull constancie valiantly subdue, resist, and strue
against the lustes thereof.

3 This first vnderstande, that there shall come in the
last dayes, mockers, whiche will walke after their
lustes,
4 And saie, Where is the promise of his commyng?
for since the fathers dyed, all thynges continue a-
like from the beginnyng of the creation.

Ag. iij.

There

Vpon the second Epistle



Here bee some yet at this daie, very waue-
ring and fickle y^euben, being caried awaie
through certaine reasons sette downe in a
Booke, entituled and written of Antichrist,
in whiche Booke is declared, that before the
latter daie men should fall into the grosse
and Deuillish errour as to denye God, and to mocke & deride
all that thei heare preached of Christe and of Domesdaie. And
this sayng is true, from whence soeuer it was borrowed. But
it ought not so straitly to bee taken, as though the whole
World should fall into suche a generall Apostacie, and so uni-
uersally blaspheme God: but that the greater parte and por-
tion thereof should fall awaie. For we see it now plainly come
to passe, and more and more daile will it burst out, that when
and where the Gospell shall be published and openly preached
among men, many wicked shall bewaie themselves, and the
inward hartes of many shall be openly detected, whose wicked-
nesse and impietie now secretly lurketh, & is dissimuled. And
the number now aduaies is not small, that belceue little or no-
thing of the latter daie, neither thinke that euer it will come.

Of suche mockers and scorners S. Peter here forewar-
neth vs, telling vs that there should be sundrie, whiche would
thinke there were none other life after this, and therefore would
passe their daies lewdely, inordinately and accordyng to the
desires of their owne sensuall lustes. In deede, at Rome and in
Italie, this Prophecie is long ago fulfilled: and thei that come
from thence to vs, byyng with them this opinion: that what
filthie and wicked life they leade there, the same doe they teach
vs, and those Countreies where they chaunce to inhabite. But
a little before the latter daie, suche manner of men must needs
bee, as Christe himselfe foretold Math. xxiii. As the dayes of
Noah were, so likewise shall the commynge of the sonne of
man be. For as in the daies before the flood, thei did eate and
drinke, marie and giue in marriage, euen vntill the daie that
Noah entred into the Arke, and knew nothing till the flood
came, and tooke them all awaie: so shall also the commynge
of

of the sonne of man be. And a litle after in the same Chapter Bee ye readie, for in suche a tyme as ye thinke not, will the sonne of man come. Againe Luc. xij. As a snare shal that day come vpon all them, that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Againe Luk. xij. As the Lightening that lighteth out of the one parte vnder Heauen; shined vnto the other parte vnder Heauen: so shal the sonne of man be in his daie. That is, it shal come merueilous sodainly and most vnlooked for, when as the Woelde shal lye in moste senselesse seruilitie, and the Woelde of God altogether detroyed, and contemptuously scorned.

This therefore shalbe a signe and a token of the nere ap-
proching of the latter daie, when as menne shal loosely lye,
acordyng to their owne wilfull lustes and pleasures: and whē
as thei shal presumptuously aske, Where is now the promise
of his coming? The Woelde hath continued thus long, and
euery thyng is in the same case as it hitherto hath been, what
straunge thyng shal there now happen? Saint Peter there-
fore so warneth vs, that we bee not lightly caried a waie with
these twicked speeches, but rather knowe that ther bee vndoub-
ted signes and tokens, that this daie will come, and that verie
shortlie.

5. For this they willingly knowe not, that the hea-
uens were of old, and the earth that was of the wa-
ter and by the water, by the woorde of God.
6. Wherefore the worlde that then was perished, ou-
erflowed with the water.



They are suche peruerso and stoward persons
(saith he) that thei disdain and grudge to be-
stowe any tyme or laboꝝ in leaꝛnyng the truth:
in so muche that with a fearyng disdain, thei
resist, and can not be brought to muche as euen
to reade the Scriptures: Yea, thei are so wilfull and obstinate,
that thei will not seme euey to thinke or knowe, howe that the
same thyng came to passe also in the olde woelde, when Noah
bulke

Vpon the second Epistle

build the Arke. Namely, how that the Earth beeing separated from the water, was in the beginning made by the Word of God, and how againe the same Earth was whollie ouerflowed and drowned with water: and how that menne trusted then so secure and carelesse, that they looked for no harme to come vnto them, neither thought of any destruction at hande. And yet sodainly the Flood couered them all: Of all which, these peruerse and froward persones, are willingly and wilfully ignorant. The plaine meaning of his wordes is, as if he should saie: If God then destroyed the World with water, and by a terrible example declared, that he was able to drowne it vniuersallie: how much more will he destroy it now, hauing so muche and so often in plaine and sundrie wordes, and in so many seuerall places threatened and promised the same?

Heauen and Earth had their Beginning and Creation by the Word of God, they were not from euerslastyng. And the Waters that rested aboue in the Cloudes, were by a firmament separated from the Waters, which were in Seas and Riuers vpon the Earth belowe. So that the Earth which was ouerwhelmed and surrounded with the Deepe, was by the Word of God parted from the Waters, and became drye lande: standing and beeing hemmed in by the Waters. And that which Peter at large describeth, is by Paulus Peter here but lightly touched. By the same Word of God whereby they were made and created, are all thynges therein preserved and gouerned. For it is not their Nature so to stande, or to remaine in suche situations: and therefore if God by his unspeakable power did not upholde, preserve, and gouerne them, all thynges would quickly come to a wrecke and ruine, and be somewhat decayed, couered, and wholly ouerflowed with Water. But mightie is the Word, which God spake, when he saied: Let the waters vnder the firmament be gathered into one place, and let the drye lande appeare: That is, let the Waters depart aside and giue place, that the drye lande might bee seen, and that menne might dwell thereon: For other wise, (as I stated aboue) by Nature the waters would ouerflowe and couer the whole

whole Earth. Whiche that it to cometh not to passe, is a
strange a miracle as any is, among all the woordes of God.
From which Sainct Peter. These wilfull flouters and disre-
pected deriders, are so peruerse and inconsiderate, that they ma-
liciously thinke I haue, to shewe this honor to the holie Ghost,
to reade the Scriptures, and therein to see how God keepech,
preserueth, and governeth the worlde with much water. whe-
re by they might well perceiue and see, that all thinges are in the
handes of GOD: and therefore like he hath once already de-
stroyed the world by bringing thereupon the general Deluge:
so also when it pleaseth him can he doe vnto vs. For the exam-
ple thereof ought to greatly to moue eche one of vs, that as he
then performed that, whiche afore he threatened, so we should
now none other wise thinke, but that he will surely abide by his
wordes, and doe that whiche he hath spoken concerning vs.

7. But the Heauens and Earth, whiche are now, are
kept by the same Woordes in store, and referred
vnto her, against the daie of Iudgement, and of
the destruction of vngodlie menne.

In the old tyme when God drowned the whole
world in the generall floud, the waters in
moste abundaunce gushed out of the Cloudes
aboue: spouted out of the bowelles of the Earth
belowe, and on euery side such streames en-
creased, that nothing was now to bee seene but Waters: the
Earth according to her Nature, being all drowned, and cou-
ered vnder the Waters. But God promised that hee would ne-
uer therefor be heauie the world with waters any more,
making a couenaunt and giuing his Rainbow in the Cloudes,
for a signe thereof, Genes. ix. Therefore he will neuer con-
sume and destroye it with fire: so that there shall then nothing
appeare but fire, as aforetyme there was nothing but
water. Hereof also S. Paule ij. Thes. j. When the Lorde Je-
sus shall shewe himself from heauen with his mightie An-

Rr. j.

gelles,

Vpon the second Epistle

gells, in flaming Fire, rendryng vengeance to them that doe not knowe God, and whiche doe not obeye vnto the Gospel of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Again, 1. Cor. iiij. Every mannes woorkes shalbee made manifest: for the daie shall declare it, because it shalbee reuelled by the Fire. Therefore, when that laste daie shall (like a sodaine flashe of Lightning) come vpon vs, all thynges in this Heauen and this Earth, shall in the twinkling of an eye be consumed to Cinders, and sodainly chaunged with Fire, euen as in the tyme of Noah, all thynges were chaunged with the water: and that GOD will not faile in this his threatening & commination: wherof we ought to take his former dealing for an infallible token, the whiche he hath left vnto vs for a signe.

8 Dearely beloued, bee not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord, as a thousand yeres, and a thousand yeres, as one daie.

9 The Lorde is not slacke concerning his promise (as some men counte slacknesse) but is patient toward vs, and would haue no man to perishe, but would all men to come to repentance.

10 But the daie of the Lorde will come as a Thiefe in the night, in the whiche the Heauens shall passe awaye with noyse, and the Elementes shall melt with heate, and the Earth with the woorkes that are therein, shalbe burne vp.



In these wordes S. Peter meeteth with those rauillers (of whom he spake afore) whiche saie, that the Apostles haue foretold many vaine and foolish tales of the latter Daye, and that all thinges stande still in the same course and order as they did before, notwithstanding so long a space of tyme, since they foretold and propheticd thereof. And this place borrowed he out of the prayer of Moses in the lxxx. Psalme. A thousand yeres (saith he) in thy sight are as yesterdaie when it is past.

This is after two sortes to bee understoode and taken: One, as it hath respect and relation to God, the other as it respecteth Men and the World: Again, this life is to be considered after one sort, the life to come after another. This life can not bee the life to come, because into that none can passe, but by Death: that is, till he cease from the functions of this mortall life. This present Life, consisteth and is preserved by eating, drinking, sleaping, digesting, &c. all whiche consist and are doon within the limitation of Houres, Dayes, and Yeres. But when thou wilt thoughtly consider the life to come, thou must quickly forget and put out of thy cogitation and remembrance, all the course of this present life, and neuer thinke, to make any conference or comparison, betweene this Life and it: For all thynges in it, are as one Daye, one Houre, one Minute, one Moment.

Saying therefore, that there is no Denumeration of tyme with God, it followeth that a thousand yeres with hym, are as one daie: and therefore the first manne Adam is as neere to God, as he that shalbe laste borne, the daie next afoze the General date of Iudgement. For God respecteth not tyme, according as the same is in length, but rather (as it were) aslope: as if a man should beholde and looke vpon a verie long Tree, lying perthwaies or aslope afoze hym: For so should he with one glance of his eye, beholde both the endes thereof at once: whiche he could not doe, if he should stande at the one ende, and beholde it long wile. Now, we mortall Creatures can not by our owne reason, beholde and consider the Tyme, but according to the length, by numbering and adding yere to yere, from Adam till the laste daie. But with God, all thynges are layd up as it were in one bundle, and seen with one blotche: that we thinke to be long, the same wile hym is short, and contrariwise. A man when he dieth, he is buried in the Earth, and his bodie is consumed into dust: neither knoweth he any thyng: but when he shall arise againe in the laste daie, he shall thinke he hath slept: he were scarcely an Houre: then shall he see and beholde a greater multitude than knew after hym, of

R. is.

whom

whom hee knewe nothing at all. Saint Peter wraying
therefore is this; The Lorde is noe slacke to performe his pro-
mise, as these Dockers and Shoymers doe thinke that he is,
but is patient and long suffering; therefore be ye ready against
the laste daye, whiche will come. Sooner then ye looke for, and
will soodaynly ouertake the wicked. Wholynges, as Saint
Paule saith i. Thers. v. When this shall haue place, and asse-
tie, then shall come vpon them for their destruction; and the
traumale vpon a woman with child, and then shall neuer ceasse.
That daie shall come with such a ruffe, and shall so sodainly
(as it were a terrible tempest) fall vpon the world, that al thinges
shall be consumed in a moment: they and in others words
He ro. viii. deth. I saye thousand, nothing shall escape
and II. Saying therefore that al these things must be dis-
solved, what maner persons ought ye to be in ho-
ly conuersation and godlinesse.

12. Looking for, and hasting vnto the commying of
that day of God?

Saying that ye know, that all these thinges shall passe awate, hothe Heauen, Earth and all thinges therein: consider and waigh with your selues with what holinesse of life and goodnesse of conseruation ye oughte to stonde readie against that date. For **S.** Peter describeth this date, as that it is euen now at hande: against the which, wee should not onely be in a readinesse, but also more ioyfully and gladly expect and looke for the coming thereof. For he would haue us with more willing huydes to goe to meete the Lord in that date, as in which, wee hope at length to see clearly ridde and deliuered from the tyrannye of Sinne, Death and Hell.

22 By the which the heauen being on fire, shall bee
dissolued, & the Elements shall melt with heate.

13 But we look for new Heavens and a new Earth, according to his promise, where righteousness will dwell.

The



The Lord by his Prophetes in sundry places hath promised that he will create newe Heauens and a newe Earth, as Esay. Lxv. Loc. I will create newe Heauens, and a newe Earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into your mynde. Againes Esay. xxi. The light of the Moone shall bee as the light of the Sunne; & the light of the Sunne shall be sevenfold, and like the light of euen daies. And Christ saith Matth. xij. that the iust shall shine as the Sunne, in the kingdome of their father. But how & after what fashion al this shall come to passe, we can not tell, knowing that it is faithfully promised by him who can not deceiue, that there shall bee newe Heauens and a newe Earth, in which shall dwell no sinne & no leauens, but righteousness and they that bee the children of God, as I haue also Rom. viij. witnesseth. There shall be nothing but hope and perpetuall solace, to wit, the kyngdome of God and all felicitie.

Here he that would bee inquisitive to knowe, whether the elect and blessed shal at that tyme bee in the Heauens or on the Earth: Truly this place suspecteth, that they shal remaine and dwell on the Earth, in that al, both Heauens and Earth shall be as one Paradiſe, wherein God himselfe will dwell. For he not onely dwelleth in the Heauens; but euery where; and therefore where he is, there shall the elect also bee.

Wherefore beloved, seeing that ye looke for such thynges, bee diligent that ye maye bee founde of hym in peace without spot, and blamelesse.

Disturbance (saith he) as ye haue escaped so great tribulations and dangers, and shall come to such tribulations and dangers, this ought not to moue you to contemne and despise any of the thynges of the world, nor to be patient to suffer what shall come. The former shall be allotted vnto paine, this is in that he saith, ye ought diligently to remember your tribulations without spot and blame; and after that tyme in peace to expect and waite for that daye.

Vpon the second Epistle

I 5 And suppose that the long suffering of our Lord
 our saluation,

That, hee so long spareth you and deferreth his
 iudgement, and doth not by and by iudge you, thinke
 pe it your greate gaine and auaille. He hath cause e-
 nough to be angrie with you, and euen by and by to
 take present reuenge vpon you, but such is his mercie and cle-
 mencie, he spareth you & pardoneth all your transgressions.

I 5 Euen as our beloued brother Paule, accordyng to
 the wise dome giuen vnto hym, wrote to you:

I 6 As one that in all his Epistles speaketh of these
 thinges among the which, some thinges are hard
 to bee vnderstaode, which they that are vnteacht
 and vnstable, wrest, as thei do also other scriptures
 vnto their owne destruction.

Since Peter here giueth expresse testimonie and
 allowance of the sound doctrine contained in S.
 Pauls Epistles: which mooueth that this Epi-
 stle was written long after the Epistles of Paule.
 And this is one of those places, wherby a man may take oc-
 casion to thinke, that this Epistle was not written by S. Pe-
 ter: as also an other sentence a little afore in this present Chap-
 ter expresse, doeth intimate, and purport: where he saith,
 that God would haue no man to perish, but would all men
 to come to repentance. For it seemeth to sound of a lower
 spirit, and to carie a lesser grace, then as one inspired with
 an Apostolical spirit is vsuall. We say not altogether like-
 ly, nor amisse to thinke, this Epistle to bee written by Pe-
 ter. For seeing that in this Epistle his purpose and meaning
 was, not to wrasse faith, but of Loue and Charity to pur-
 posely abazer hym self in his style, as the nature of Char-
 ity alwaies is to doo, to be intreated by to humble hym self
 to his Neighbour: as on the other part, Faith alwaies moueth

with and liſteth by it ſelfe to Godward, ſheweth moſt graue and
 And this do he well ſee would come to paſſe; that many
 light and deſtable ſpirites would weſt and wryng, inuert
 and peruert ſcriptures wordes in ſundry places. For that, in
 his Epiſtles there are ſome Certes harde to bee vnderſtoode;
 as where he ſaith, that no man is iuſtified by workes, but by
 Faith onely. Rom. iij. Again, that the Lawe which giveth vs
 knowe Sinne. Rom. iij. & vij. And moſt onew; Where ſinne is
 bounded; there grace aboundeth muche more; Rom. v. and
 ſuche like places. For ſeldome as they heare this, they ſtraight
 wayes ſpeake out into theſe ope like ſpeeches. If it be thus, we
 will liue pale and merille, wee will doe nothing good worke at all,
 and yet ſhall wee (deuerrtheleſſe) be ſaued and iuſtified: and af-
 ter this ſorte euen nowadayes doe they ſake vnder and ſhame
 fullie helpe vs, ſaying: that wee ſhal be condemned
 and diſpauſe good workes. But wee muſt not thinke it any
 meruaile or ſtrange thing; ſaying; thei haue not ſpared to
 weſt and miſconſtrue S. Pauls wordes.

17. Ye therefore beloved, ſeyng ye knowe theſe thin-
 ges before, beware, leſt ye bee alſo plucked awaie
 with the errour of the wicked, and fall from your
 owne ſtedfaſtneſſe.

18. But growe in grace, and in the knowledge of our
 Lord and ſauour Jeſus Chriſt, to him be glorie
 bothe now and for evermore. Amen.



ſeyng therfore ye perfectly knowe all theſe thin-
 ges afore declared, and are certainly giuen to
 vnderſtande that many falſe Teachers ſhal bee
 chopped and ſoyled in among you to ſeduce the
 ſimple, and many ſroward mockers ſhal wil-
 fully miſtake and weſt the ſcriptures, not beyng willing to
 vnderſtande them aright, it greatly ſtandeth you vpon, to take
 good heede to your ſelues, and moſte carefullly to be ware of
 them, leaſt with their falſe and erroneouſ doctrine thei carie
 you

Vpon the second Epistle

you a waite from the righte faith: but that others that perished
 in increase of godliness and knowledge; that such one to
 date through continuall preaching and exercise of the Word
 of God, ye maie be more and more confirmed and strenghten
 in the faith and love of our Lord Iesus Christ.

And here wee are to beholde and note the greater care that
 the Apostle had ouer them which had now recurred to the faith
 whiche caused hym to write vnto them these second Epistles,
 wherein is largely and plentifully layed doune, at any what so-
 euer is expedient and necessarie for a Christian mans knowledg

yea concerning those thynges also whiche are to come pass
 by Gods graunt vnto his grace, that we maie haue that
 we may rightly vnderstand and effectually keepeth the same,
 to the glorie of his holy and blessed name, and to the
 comfort and consolation of our brethren and
 our own soules and consciences.

Amen.

Y
 I
 81



the righte faith: but that others that perished
 in increase of godliness and knowledge; that such one to
 date through continuall preaching and exercise of the Word
 of God, ye maie be more and more confirmed and strenghten
 in the faith and love of our Lord Iesus Christ.



THE GENERALL

Epistle of S. Iude.



IUDE a seruauit of Iesus Christ,
and brother of Iames, to them
whiche are called and sanctified
of God the Father, and reserued
to Iesus Christ:

2 Mercie vnto you; and peace
and loue bee multiplied:

3 Beloued, when I gaue all dili-
gence, to write vnto you of the

common Saluation, it was needefull for me to write vnto
you, to exhorte you, that ye should earnestly contende for
the maine aunce of the Faith, whiche was onse giuen vnto
the Sainctes.

4 For there are certaine men crept in, whiche were before
of old ordained to this condemnation: vngodlie men thei are
whiche tourne the grace of our God into wantonnesse, and
deny God the onely Lorde, and our Lorde Iesus Christ.

5 I will therefore putt you in remembrance, forasmuche
as ye once knewe this, how that the Lorde, after that he had
deluered the people out of Egypt, destroyed them after ward,
whiche beleued not.

6 The Angelles also whiche kept not their first estate, but
luste their owne habitation, he hath reserued in euerylastyng
chaines vnder darkenesse, vnto the Iudgement of the greater
daye.

7 As Sodome and Gomorhe, and the Cities about them,
whiche in like maner as thei did, committed fornicatio, & follo-
wed straunge flesh, are set forth for an example, & suffer the

Ss. j.

vengeance

Vpon the Epistle

vengeance of eternall fier.

8 Like wile notwithstanding these dreames also defile the
Fleshe, and despise Government, and speake euill of a him
that are in authoritie.

9 Yet Michaell the Archangell, when he strove against the
Deuill, and disputed aboute the bodie of Moses, durste not
blame hym with cursed speakyng, but saith, The Lorde re-
buke thee.

10 But these speake euill of those thynges, whiche they
knowe not: and whatsoeuer thynges they knowe naturallie,
as beastes, whiche are without reason, in those thynges they
corrupt themselves.

11 Wo bee vnto them, for they haue followed the waie of
Cain, and are caste awaie by the deceipt of Balaams wages,
and perishe in the gantlayng of Core.

12 These are spottes in your seattles of Charitie when they
seest wish you, without all feare, feedyng themselves: cloudes
they are without water, caried about of wandes: to triptrares
and without fruit, waste thens, and plucked vp by the roots.

13 They are the sayyng wayes of the Sea, for theyng out abis-
owne shame: They are wandying Staires, to whom is refer-
red the blacknesse of darknesse for euer.

14 And Enoch is to the seuenh from Adam, prophesied of
suche, sayyng, Behold, the Lorde cometh with thousandes
of his Sanctes,

15 To giue iudgement against all men: and to rebuke all
the vngodlie among them of all their wicked doedes, whiche
they haue vngodlie committed: and of all their cruell spea-
kynges, whiche wicked synners haue spoken against hym.

16 These are murmurers, complaineis, walkyng after their
owne lustes: whose mouthes speake proude thynges, hauing
memmes perfores in admiration, because of a vantage.

17 But, ye beloued, remember the woordes whiche were
spoken before of the Apostles of our Lorde Iesus Christ.

18 How that they told you that there should bee mockers
in the last tyme, whiche should walke after their owne vn-
godlie

godlie lustes.

19 These are makers of sectes, fleshely, hauyng not the Spirit.

20 But, ye beloued, edifie your selues in your moste holie Faith, praiyng in the holie Ghost,

21 And keepe your selues in the loue of God, looking for the mercie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, vnto eternall life.

22 And haue compassion off some, in puttyng difference.

23 And other saue with feare, pullng them out of the fier, and hate euen the Garment spotted by the flethe.

24 Now, vnto him that is able to keepe you, that ye fal not, and to presente you faultlesse before the presence of his glorie with ioye.

25 That is, to God onely wise, our Sauour, bee glorie, and Maiestie, and Dominion, and Power, bothe now and for euer. Amen.



And thus I have written unto you, my beloved, that ye may know the things which shall come to pass, and that ye may be able to stand against them, and that ye may be able to overcome them, and that ye may be able to keep yourselues from falling into temptation, and that ye may be able to keep yourselues from being deceived by the false teachers, and that ye may be able to keep yourselues from being led away by the spirit of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

And thus I have written unto you, my beloved, that ye may know the things which shall come to pass, and that ye may be able to stand against them, and that ye may be able to overcome them, and that ye may be able to keep yourselves from falling into temptation, and that ye may be able to keep yourselves from being deceived by the false teachers, and that ye may be able to keep yourselves from being led away by the spirit of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Vpon the Epistle

1. IVDE a seruant of Iesus Christ, and brother of James, to them whiche are called and sanctified of God the Father, and reserued to Iesus Christ:
2. Mercie vnto you and peace & loue be multiplied.



His Epistle is attributed vnto S. Iude the Apostle, brother of James the lesse, and Symon: Mark.vj. Luk.vj. Whose mother was Marie the wife of Cleopas, and Sister of the blessed Virgin Marie the mother of Christ: loh.xvj. But it appeareth not expressely to be written by that Iude who was the Apostle, because heerein hee speaketh and maketh mention of the Apostles, as though hee were but one of their Disciples, and had written certaine yeares after them. Neither containeth it any speciall or peculiar matter in it, other then that maie well and fullie bee gathered out of the afore going second Epistle of S. Peter: vnto the which it hath entier reference, and out of which, al his reasons and saynges are in a maner taken. To conclude, this is nothing els, but an Epistle directly paining and pointing out the abuses, sleightes and treacheries of our Papistieall Clergie.

3. Beloued, when I gaue all diligence to write vnto you, of the common saluation, it was needefull for mee to write vnto you to exhorte you, that ye should earnestly contend for the maintenaunce of the faith which was once giuen vnto the Sanctes..



he Effect of his meanyng is this. I could not choose but write vnto you, to admonishe and exhorte you to persist and manfully gooe forwarde in that faith, whiche hath now once ben preached vnto you. As if he should saye, It is needefull and necessarie that I should put you in remembraunce, to strue and with al your endeavour to continue and perseuere in the right waie. The cause why it is so needefull

full and necessarie, they followeth.

- 4 For there are certaine men crept in, which were before of olde ordained to this condemnation;



This is the cause why I haue taken in hande to admonish you, so perseuer and continue in that Faith which ye haue heard: because men now there are creeping in, and already are entered, certaine false seducers and deceyfull teachers, which goe about to teach and solde among you other countervailing doctrines, contrarie to those rules of Faith which ye haue soundly leamed: take ye heede therfore, for they be such a mischievous and slye generation, that they will subtilly and sodaynly steale away mens consciences, and with their erroneous and tromperie doctrine, and cast them out of the right waie of truth, before they can perceiue it by the white of their seelyng collations. So saide St. Peter afore, There shalbee among you false teachers &c. And St. Iude here saith, they were long agoe foreordained to this condemnation & iudgement. Which thing is easie for vs to vnderstande, which knowe that no man is iustified by any of his owne woorkes, but by Faith onely in Christ: in whom who so assuredly and faithfully beloueth, and saith, as vpon his chief buttresse and onely pillar of safety, is made partaker of al his benefites: & all Christes woorkes, by Faith are become his. After this sure ground worke of Faith once layed: all our woorkes that wee are able to doe, ought to tend to the benefite and commoditie of our Neighbour. What woorkes so euer are wrought to any other ende than this: are Veniall and damnable. Let a man therfore diligently take heede how he dealeth, and lette hym direct his woorkes as fruittes of his liuely Faith, to the helpe and benefite of his Neighbour: so al other be odious and abhominable in the sight of God, of which sorte are these noised hypocrites, and mercuriall woorkes of flatteryng priests and mumbling Priests. Therefore that

St. Iy.

carthy

Vpon the Epistle

carieth men from the ankerholde of synne to the true bables
and lowlie Ceremonies of these greaſie Notaries, and their
woordes, is a deceiver and a ſeducer, and draweth men with
them into the like daunger of condemnation.

¶ 4. Vngodly men they are, whiche turne the grace of
our God into wantonnesse,



THE preaching whiche is opened vnto vs of the
grace of God, and wherein Christ is set forth
and commended vnto vs, and how hee with all
his good benefites is exhibited and freely giuen
vnto vs, so that wee are now cleerly freed and
deliuered from Sinne, Death, Hell and all miserie; This free
grace and gift (I saie) thus offered vnto vs in the Gospell, these
seducing and false, deceiuefull Hypocrites doo abuse, to the
maintainance of themselves in all lasciuious wantonnesse.
That is, they heare themselves borne vnder the name of Chri-
stians, and shap boast and prae muche of the Gospell, but they
live so dissolute and disorderlie; that they doe all thynges
according to the pitch of their owne wilfull affections and
lawlesse lustes, spending the tyme in riot, banquetting, ca-
uowing and Gluttonie. They vnne and vantage saying, that
they haue taken vpon them a spirituall kinde of life, and inter-
ly remooued the vnglighten of the secular Roie, and worldly de-
sires; whereas vnder the vizarde of this pretended simplici-
tie, they haue misused and raked into their handes (in a manner)
all the wealth, delices and dignities in the world. This is
already (saied Iude) begunne to be seen in moſt places. For wee
see of this mischiefe of Bishops seeking Lordly autho-
ritie, and higher prerogative then other Christians, beganne
aboue a thousand yeares agoe, whiche chyring in the Epistles
of Hierome is euidently to be seen.

And now GOD the trulye Lorde, and our Lorde
Iesus Christ, of his mercie and grace, hath



Deaf is in pitey, but not pitey in his Epistle. But this
Denying, as it is there and therein come, is not within
the mouth, (So outwardly in whose the confession
that GOD is the Lord) but in their woordes and dealinges:
that they deny the Lord Christ; not as knowing him to be
the Lord, but challenge rather a Lordship, and presume
with their hearts to themselves. And as we see and shall see, that
when as they pious be, that fasting, pilgrimage,
building of Abbates, Churches, Monasteries, Bodities, and
such like, is the right high way to felicity, that their own mis-
rabble seoure, and drawe men from the right way, to their deper-
ther Woyes, utterly supplanting, concealing, and keeping
Christ down. Which is no less, then if they should say, Christ
is a worthy thing nothing, yet he can his woordes and deedes
and his merits, that he should be able to save us, and to
merite Heauen with thine owne Woyes. And thus Christ
by the Lord, who hath bought and redeemed us with his
owne precious blood, as St. Peter also declares. I 3

conclusion of the

5. I will therefore putte you in remembrance, for as
much as I have seen and knowe this, how that the Lord
after he had delivered the people out of Egypt,
destroyed them afterward which beleueed not.
And the Angels also which kept not their first estate,
and but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in
everlasting chains under darkness, unto the iudg-
ement of the great day. And thus I have declared
7. As Sodome and Gomorrie, and the Cities about
them, which in like manner as they did committed
Fornication, and followed strange fleshly desires,
and so forth for an example; and suffer the vengeance
of eternal Fire, as I have said, and thus I have
declared.



So be instructed by these few examples, whereof the
two last are mentioned by St. Peter. One may be here
taught more, and that is of the children of Israel, whose
God

God by many wonders brought out of the Lande of Egypt, and who tooke their vnbreife dyed in the wilderness and were distressed: so that of fiftie hundred thousand men, besides women and children under twentie yeares, that came out of Egypt, there were left no more but onely twaine. Num. xj. This example he bringeth for an admonition and terrour: as if he should saie, let those that are called by the name of Christians, and vnder colour thereof turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, take heed and looke well to themselves, lest it happen vnto them, whiche light vpon the Israelites. And truly, since the tyme that blind Poperie beganne, and the cleere light of the Gospell was couered and restrained from being publicly preached, one plague hath still followed the necke of another, whereby GOD hath still from tyme to tyme taken reuenge of the vnbelievers, and giuen them ouer into the very hands of Sathan.

8 Likewise, notwithstanding these Dreamers, also defile the fleshe,



These Doctors & Teachers he calleth Dreamers, because that as when one dreameth, he thynketh himselfe to haue somewhat, and to see many thynges, whiche in truth are but vaine phantasies: and when he awaketh and seeth himselfe to haue nothing, then perceiuethe all to bee but a dreame, & so maketh he no accompt thereof. So, whatsoeuer these juggling Rabbines and Lordly maisters doe saie, is nothing but a dreame: whiche they shall one daie, when their eyes shall be opened, well finde and know to haue been nothing at all. And namely, when they goe about to perswade men that their houses are houses, their forked Cappes, their wilfull Pouertie, their countrefaie Chastitie, their bowed Obedience, & suche like trash and guesse are thinges vnto acceptable vnto God. Wherin they interuillously beate themselves in their owne imaginations, and thinke themselves to see that to be in deede is but false and vnicall,

ficall, and no better then a very sonde and foolish dreame: as in truthe, All this their trashie and tromperie is before God nothing els but mere dreames and lyes. Therefore, in calling them Dreamers, he did very wel, and bit them home with their right name, for that, with their dreames they sedure and beguile bothe themselves and the Worlde.

This vice of liuyng loose and wantonlike, the Apostles doe peculiarly attribute and ascribe to those whiche bee greazed Priestes and marked Baalamites. God long agoe foretold vs, that they should bee a Sect liuyng without Mies. And Daniell also prophesying of the kyngdome of the Pope, foretold long agoe, that, their lust should be vpon women, Dan. xj. because he foresawe that they would be suche, as coulde not abide to bee linked in lawfull marriage with any women, but burne in lust and wicked concupiscence. And this is one of the outwarde iolie vertues, not muche dislike to that their other inwarde properties, namely that they are dreaming Sleepers.

- 8 And despise gouernements, and speake euill of the
that are in authoritie.

Their third qualitie is, that they refuse to bee subiecte to the Temporall Sworde, and Civile Magistrate. But wee knowe, and so teache, that so long as wee liue vpon Earth, wee are bounde by the Worde of GOD, to yeelde our obedience vnto Magistrates. For the Faith of Christe doeth not violate, infringe, and disannull externall Pollicies: and therefore it is not lawfull for any man to exempt himself from his obedience toward them. Wherevpon we see it plainly and consequently prooued, that the Popes Canons and Decrees, touching Ecclesiasticall Immunitie, bee nothing but heere deuises and inuentions of Satan.

- 9 Yet Michael the Archangell, when he stroue against the Deuill and disputed about the bodie of Moses

Vpon the Epistle

durst not blame hym with cursed speakyng, but
saied The Lorde rebuke thee.



This is one of the places, for the which, this
Epistle was of the old Fathers not allowed
and receiued for Canonicall; because he here
allegeth an example, whiche is not read els
where in any place within the whole bodie of
the Bible: Namely, that Michall the Ar-
changel contended with the Deuill, about the bodie of Moses.
This contention some thinke grewe herebypon, because there
are so many notable stories written of Moses, namelie, in the
laste of Deuter: where wee reade that the Angell of God bu-
ried hym, but that no man knoweth of his Sepulchre where
it is, vnto this daie. Againe, because the Scripture testifieth of
hym, in the same Chapter, that there arose not a Prophete in
Israell like vnto Moses, whom the Lorde knewe face to face.
Ecce. Saying therefore in what greate estimation and reuerence
Moses was among the Jewes: some of the Interpreters and
Expositors, that write vpon that same laste Chapter of Deut.
saie, that Moses was buried by God, and that his Sepulchre
was neuer hitherto knowne, or founde by any man. Whiche
God did, to the intent the Jewes should bee kept from all oc-
casion of committing Idolatrie, wherinto they might easily
and quickly haue slipped, if they had had the bodie of so noble
and renowned a Prophete among them, as Moses was.
Wherebypon they gather, that this contention here mentioned
by S. Jude) arose: because the Deuill would gladly haue had
the bodie of Moses to bee manifestly knowne where it was,
to the intent for people might haue had occasion to committe
Idolatrie, hereby intised vnto them. Now, albe it Michall
were an Archangel, yet durst he not (saith S. Jude) rebuke
hym with cursed speakyng, and railing Sentence. But these
blasphemous mouthes, and peruerse persones, are not asha-
med to despise, treade vnder foote, and speake euill of the Po-
wers, whiche are ordained by God, and to curse them to the
eigne



Cain killed his brother for none other cause; but for that his brother was iustier and godlier then he himselfe: and for that God had moze respect and greater delight in his brothers sacrifice; then he had in his. Therefore the waie of Cain, is to trust in our owne Works, and to renouwe and twiste those Works that bee true, and good Works in deede: finally, to murder and slay all those that walke in the trueth, and in the right waie: Whiche nature and practise wee see the Papists most earnestly wity tooth and naile, daely to put in bye.

II And are cast awaie by the deceit of Balaams wages.

It shoulde bee inwardly hidden wity Christ, in an assured trust and confidence of Gods diuine grace: but they licentiouslly breake out, and actually dispose themselves into simple toys of eternall and outward Works: and doe all things for greibynesse of gain, and pecuniarie reward, to all their beastes, after the example of the Prophete Balaam, as was declared in the seconde Chapter of the second Epistle of S. Peter aforegoing.

II And perill in the gainsayng of Core.



Of the seditious rebellion of Core, and how he wity his wicked confederates, was swallowed into the Earth, wee reade in the fourth Booke of Moses, Chape. xvj. Moses was appointed and called of God to this ende, that he shoulde bying and conducte the people of Israel out of Egypt, and his brother Aaron, to bee the high Priest. But Core beinge also of the same Tribe and familie, and amblesidly aspying to enuy some high auctoritie, assigned vnto hym two hundred and fiftie Captaynes, of the beste and most renowned among all the people: wity whom he raised by suche a mutinous faction, and seditious Tumulte, that they brought all the companie into an vyrope, and welnere caused

Moses and Aaron to flee, and giue place to their furie. But Moses falling downe vppon his face, praied vnto the Lorde, that hee should not looke vnto their offsyng and Sacrifice: and when he had spoken to the people, that thei should separate themselves, and departe from the companie of those wicked conspiratours, he saied: Hereby ye shal knowe, whether the Lord hath sent me, or no. If these men dye the common death of all men, or if they bee visited after the visitation of all men, the Lorde hath not sent me. But if the Lorde make a newe thyng, and the Earth open her mouth, and swallowe downe these men quicke into the pitte, then ye shall vnderstande that these men haue blasphemed, and prouoked the Lorde. And as soone as he had made an ende of speaking all these woordes, euen the grounde claue asunder thas was vnder them, and the Earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them vp with their families, and all the men that were with Core, and all their goodes. So thei and al that thei had, went doune alieue into the pitte, and the Earth conuered them. And there came out a Fier fro the Lorde, whiche consumed the twoo hundred and fiftie men, that had adioyned themselves to Core, and offred Incense.

This Example doeth saint Iude hyng against these our horrible and blasphemous Popelinges: who charge vs to bee the Authours of Sedition and mutinie, when wee preache against them: whereas in deede, it is thei that are the causers of all garboile and trouble. For Christ is our Aaron and high Priest: whom onely we ought to heare, and acknowledge for the Bishoppe of our Soules. But thea can not the Pope and his grea^{xt} Bishoppes abide: for thei aduance themselves a lott, and challenge to thei all domination and power: and flatly oppose themselves against Christe. These beeryng aliogether dyuided and buried in Earthly conuersion and pleasure, and beeryng the vete world it self, doeth S. Iude compare and resemble to Core and his companions, whom God straungely punished: so that the grounde opened and swallowed them up alieue.

3th Item

Et. lii.

12 These

Vpon the Epistle

- 12 These are Spottes in your feastes of Charitie whē
thei feast with you, without all feare, feedyng them
selues: Clouds thei are without water, caried about
of windes; corrupt Trees and without fruite, twise
dead, and plucked vp by the rootes.
- 13 Thei are the ragyng waues of the Sea, fomyng out
their owne shame: Thei are wandying Staires, to
whom is referued the blackenesse of darkenisse for
euer.



AL this wee haue already heard Iargelis dis-
coursed in the Epistle of S. Peter. The grea-
ter parte of Christendome; hath trained and
brought by their chyldren to the order of Priest-
hoode, and for none other cause, but to live idly
and delicately without any labour of their owne handes, or
trouble of preachyng: Voluptuousslie enioyng and spendyng
at their owne ease and pleasure those goodes; whiche poore
men painfullie gotte in the sweate of their browes. Thei are
among the common people reputed and taken for the wo-
rthiest Pillers, & (as it were) the Jewelles, and ornaments of
the Christian Congregation: whereas in deede thei be but the
Spottes and Wenches of the Common wealth, the Skumme
and filthe of the people, and the detestable vizardes of hy-
pocriticall holynesse: thei keepe tolie cheare, and fare moste de-
liciously, acrooyng to the old adage of Proverbe, whiche cal-
leth delicate and vaine eates, morselles for a Priest: & in alle
thei are without feare and care, verily thinkyng that Satan
hymself is not able to overthowe them. The flocke thei feede
nothyng at all, but are rather themselves the ravenous Wol-
ues, that deuoure and eate by the sheepe. Thei are Cloudes
that are caried on high, and skated moste in the Ayre. For thei
haue entailed themselves in the chiefest places and best cou-
mes, and carie all the credit and countenance in the Church:
thei ought to teache others, but thei care nothing at all for that:
suffryng them to be caried hither and thither into the Foggie
miste

misste of error and ignorance by the Deuill, the professer
 enemy of mankinde. Thei are also fruitlesse and naked Trees,
 such as are in the beginning of Winter, bearing neither fruite
 nor leaues, yet thei occupie a rounne as other Trees doe. Thei
 beare a shewe of the Bishoppes of Christ, but thei haue in them
 no peere nor parte neither of hym, nor yet of his Woordes or
 Woorkes, but are dead at the rootes.

They are also ragyng waues of the Sea, that is, euen as
 the windes in the Sea do tolle and sturre the waues this waie
 and that waie: so are thei also caried whither soeuer Sathan
 bziuerth them. They foame out their owne shame, euen as a
 pot, that hath a greate heate vnder it: thei are so full of malice,
 that it runneth ouer at the brim, thei are so nozzeled in spight-
 fulnesse and crueltie, that their swelling and cankered stom-
 ackes can not holde it, but must needes cast vp and vomite
 out all their beastly filthinesse, and therewith also defile and pol-
 lute others. They are wandryng Starrs, such as they call pla-
 netes retrograde hauyng their motion backwarde: in like ma-
 ner these fellows, whose life and doctrine is nothyng but er-
 rour, seduce and beguile bothe themselves and all those that
 followe them. And therefore there is reserued for them, the
 mist of darkenesse for ever.

In these wordes and examples, Iude hath depainted and
 set out our Gallying mates and pollshorne Prelates, who vnder
 the name of Christ and of the Church, doe bying in a Sea
 of mosse lewde and execrable maners: and yet neuertheless
 vnder pretence thereof dooe cathe and rake vnto themselves
 all the wealth of the World, and bying all mens brades vnder
 their girdles.

14. And Enoch also the seuenth from Adam, proph-
 cyed of such, sayng, Behold the Lorde cometh
 with thousandes of his Sainctes, to giue iudgment
 against all men:

Vpon the Epistle



His place is not any where read in the Scripture: which is an other reason why some of the auncient Fathers would not admitt & receiue this Epistle as canonickall: howbeit this is no sufficient cause, whereby to disallowe or reject any Booke: for S. Paule also ij. Timot. iij. nameth Iannes and Iambres, two aduersaries of Moses, whose names (notwithstandyng) are not read in the whole Byble beside. Howsoeuer mens iudgements haue been or bee, we will not presently stande vpon that point. But this is true, that God from the beginnyng of the Worlde hath euer reueiled his Worlde to some; wherein to the beleeuers grace and saluation is promised, but to the unbelieuers, iudgement and damnation is threatened, and so it still continued euen till the Ascension of Christ: from whiche tyme, the Worlde of God hath been openly and generally preached ouer all the Worlde. But before the natiuitie of Christ, GOD still chose some to himself whom he vsed as it were a certaine threde, from hande to hande to deliuer the manifestation and publication of his Worlde: first from Adam to Abrahā: then from him to Dauid, and so to the Virgin Marie, the mother of Christ, and others moe to whom he reueiled and deliuered his truth.

The Gospell therfore was alwaies preached in the worlde, but neuer so openly as now in these latter daies. After this sorte did this Patriarch Enoch preache and publish the Worlde of the Lozde: whiche (vndoubtedly) he had learned of his Father Adam, by influence from the holy Ghost.

For it is recorde of hym in the Scriptures; Gen. v. that he led an vpright and godly life, and therefore was taken vp of God and was no more seen. Wherevpon hymng that fable, that hee should come againe before the daye of Iudgement: whiche thing is not to bee looked for, vntil we will haue stand it in this sense; that he shall come againe in spirit: namely, for that, his preachyng dooth stily lumpe and agree to the tyme next afore the generall Iudgement: as here this present place verp truly agreeth thereto: wherein he speaketh so certainly of the laste Daie, as if he had presently seene it with his eyes.

eyes. The Lorde (saith he) commeth with thousandes of his Sainctes: that is, with an infinite multitude. For, these wordes must needs be understood, onely of the last Daye, wherein the Lorde will come to Iudgement with all his Sainctes. For when he first came into the Worlde, he came not with many thousandes of his Sainctes, but alone; and that, not to iudge, but to giue Grace.

15 And to rebuke all the vngodlie among them of all their wicked deedes, whiche they haue vngodlie committed,



His place both Iude not vnaptly here inferre directly sounding against false Guides and counterfaine Teachers, whiche he knowe in greateswarmer wordes come a little afore the last Daye: but it seemeth also verp aptly to beare this interpretation and signification, that the Lorde at his comming will first destroye and quite ouerthrowe the Pope with al his imperious Papiſcalitie. For to such a great mucheuous euill there is none other helpe or remedie, for the better abolishing and quite taking of hym a waie. For so long as the Worlde endureth, there will neither bee ende of hym, neither can there any reformation and amendment in hym be hoped for. And truly, this place can not bee understoode of any other then of our Papiſtes, who so miserably and lamentable seduce the Worlde. For a more folye, desperate and wicked life, then that of the Papiſtes, can not possibly be imagined: wherein as thei sumptuously already wallowe, so will thei still continue worse and worse, pretending (not with standing) greatesanctimonie and holynesse under the name of Christ, whom thei vse as a cloke to conuine and hide all their villanious trecherie. Under the name of Papiſtes we may vnderstande both them and all the rabble of seducing Popes, and decciuers belike, which shal come a little before the last Daye, and all suche as embrace and followe their godlesse impietie. This place therefore that he here allegeth, is to be understood

Vpon the Epistle

of the last daye of Iudgement. Wee see, of whom he speciallie meaneth that the said Iudgement is to be looked for. Wher vpon wee conclude that our tyrannous Chancelinges and their uen Tyauntes are with trembling expectation referred for the last daye and commyng of the Lorde, whether the same come and appoche with speede, or staie yet somewhat longer.

15 And of all their cruell speakynges, whiche wicked synners haue spoken against hym.

In these wordes be both reprooueth their life, and reprehendeth their saynges: and it is as much as he should saye: They speake presumptuously and impudently against the Lord, and against his commyng, they bee impudent and tooo arrogant, they deride and blasphemie hym, as S. Peter also in his Epistle writeth of them. He speaketh not here, of their life, as it is deuel and deformed with sinnes and iniquities, but as it is giuen ouer and entirelye addicted to woorkes all impietie. I call that Impietie, when the life is led without Faith, although the outward conuersation bee not altogether flagitious and damnable. Such workes be in deede the fruytes of Impietie: but Impietie it self is properly called that life, whiche glittreth outwardly with a gaye shew of hypocriticall workes, whereas the hart is deelye voyde of Faith. Suche impietous persons (saith he) the Lord will reprob, because the presumptuous doctrine whiche they boldly teach, they stillie defende and obstinatelye maintaine: leaninge alwaies to their owne brainicke glosses and constructions, and not sufferinge themselves to be corrected and turned to the truth: but are harder then the Flint, and will neuer desist from contradictyng and blaspheming the doctrine of true godlinesse. Here we see, howe true these wordes of Church paint out and describe the kinde of persons that are and should top themselves into the Church towarde the latter ende of the World, whiche undoubtedly are Papistes, as to euery man evidentlye appeareth.

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walkyng after their owne lustes: whose mouthes speake proude thynges,



f a man finde fault with their dealynges, and reprove them as unlabylful and dysobedient to the wyll of God, he shal be sure to byng himself thereto into a pecke of troubles: they will murmur, repine and gnaw their teeth at him. As for example: if aman should but leaue out or omit any pcece or parte of the Bishoppes ordinarie style and wonted cyle, they straightwayes with open thyoates crye out, (Contempt and Disobedience.) There is no waite left, to withstand their lawlesse lustes and selfwilled dealynges, for they bragge that they haue power bothe ouer our bodies & ouer our soules: they haue gotten into their handes bothe the swordes: so that they can not be compelled by Lawe to dooe that is iust and right: and that any man should preache against them, that can they not at any hand abide. They haue exempted themselves and all theirs, from all maner of taxe, tribute and imposition; so that no man dare once touche any thing that belongeth vnto them: finallye, they are growen to that degree of tyrannie, that no man dare presume to preache a wyorde contrarie to the order of their peruysil pproceedings. To alledge any Scriptures against them, it is altogether bootlesse: for they saie, that none maie expound or enterpiete the same, sauing they themselves. By which meanes it is come to passe that in all places and in all thynges they liue as licentious as they list. For these sayynges can not be wrested or applied against vs professours of the true Gospell; for that wee reuerently and dutifullly submit our selues, and yeeld our obedience aswell to the Scriptures, as to the ciuile power from bothe whiche, they will be free and not compellable by any. Last of al, their Decrees and Canons be pfect and thwacked full of proude, arrogant, and swelling wyordes, and they wyorde of all good and godlinesse.

Vpon the Epistle

16 Having mens persones in admiration, because of a vantage.



His bitterh their natures and dispositions verp
tunpe, for thei iudge all thinges according to the
person. In all the whole Popes Canons, ye shall
not once finde it commaunded, that the Bishoppe
should humble himself beneath the pooze Parithe Priest, nor
any of the fructies of a Christian life whatsoeuer. But al thin-
ges rather sounde thus. Let the Curate bee under the Priest,
the Priest under the Bishoppe, the Bishoppe under the Arch-
bishoppe, the Archbishoppe under the Patriarch, and the Pa-
triarch under the Pope. Finallie, how euery one should weare
his Habite, his Amyle, his Cleede and Cowle, after what fa-
shion he should clippe his hayre, haue his crowne, and beard,
and make his apparaille, how many Benefices and how many
Prebendes he might keepe &c. Thus, thei broughe all thinges
to certaine externoll Ceremonies and traditions of their own
making, and wholly occupied themselves in mere, childlike,
foolish, and frivolous trifles, which thei had in greate account
and estimation: yea thei iudged it no lesse then deadly sinne, if
any man should refuse to adoe a reuerence these their bopithe
tapes. And therefore very well saith Jude in this place, Thei
haue mens persones in admiratio, for thei laype vp their lewd
and loude lyes in bizarden of hypocritie, and only admire those
gate shewes that are visiblie object to the eye. All this while
thei neuer speake woude, neither knowe any thing as they
should knowe, of Faith, of Charitie, or of the Crosse. And yet
the pooze vulgare people suffer themselves still to be beelotted
with these Popithe Buggen, and thinke themselves to doe ver-
y acceptable seruice to God, in giuing all their Goods, Sub-
staunce and Patrimonie to serue these blithe Swine in the
Boze of this their lewd sensualitye.

17 But, ye beloued, remember the woordes which
were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lorde
Iesus

Iesus Christ.

- 18 How that thei told you that there should be mockers in the lasse tyme, whiche should walke after their owne vngodlie lustes.



His place also giueth some occasion to thinke, that this Epistle was not written by Saincte Iude the Apostle, because the Authour hereof reckoneth not hymself among the other Apostles, but speaketh so of them, as though thei had preached long before his tyme: whereby it maie well bee thought, that this was rather written by some other godlie man, that had read Saincte Peters Epistle, and out of it called and gathered these woordes and Sentences. Who these mockers bee, wee haue afore declared, and who thei also bee, that walke after their owne lustes: not onely carnall and fleshely lustes, but those rather that sauour of horrible impietie, whereby thei liue in the respect, accordyng to their owne inordinate desires: neither reuerencyng the Ciuile Magistrate, nor obeyng the Word of God, but liue so loosely and contemptuously, that thei neither obediently acknowledge any externall, nor yet internal Government. All Lawes aswell Diuine as Humaine, thei flatly despise and sette at naught: and so lye in the fire, in the middle betweene Heauen and Earth, euen as thei are hoisted by and caried aloft by their Staffe the Deuill.

- 19 These are makers of sectes, Fleshely, hauyng not the Spirit.



Here he alludeth to that, whiche saincte Peter in his Epistle saied, That there should come false Teachers, whiche prauilie should bryng in damnable heresies. These are thei that disobediently breake asunder the vnitie of faith: and being not contented with the common profession, and generall appellation of Christians, where in eue one is to serue
(16.11.) and

Vpon the Epistle

and doe good to his neighbour) thei deuise and intent certaine newe uppstart Sectes of their owne, whereby thei feigne a false counterfaite seruice to Almighty God. Furthemore thei are Naturall, and fleshly, as brute Beastes, hauyng no more Spirit and vnderstandyng, then hath an Oxle or an Asse: thei followe the iudgement of Nature, and are caried aboate with the concupiscence and luste of the Flesh. Finallie, thei haue not the Worde of GOD, to direct and leade them, how to frame their liues and conuersations.

- 20 But, ye beloued, edifie your selues in your moste holie Faith, praiyng in the holie Ghost,
21 And keepe your selues in the loue of God,

In these fewe woordes he hath briefly comprehended, the whole summe & effect of all true Christianitie. Faith is the grounde worke and foundation, wherupon wee muste build: and this building or edifying is daiesly and howersly, to profite and goe forwarde in the knowledge of God, and of our Lorde Iesus Christ: whiche is not doen but by the operation of the holie Ghost. Beeyng in this sort builded, wee are not to dooe any Worke, whereby to purchase and winne to our selues any Merite, or Saluation, but onely to profite and doe good to our neighbours. And here in must wee haue a moste diligent care, that wee continue and perseuere in true and sincere Loue, without any intermission: not as dooe these foolish people, whiche stae themselves vpon their owne rotten Workes, and deuise certaine peculiar Sectes, wherewith they make awaie and seduce men from brotherly Loue and Charitie.

- 21 Looking forthe mercie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, vnto eternall life.

Here is Hope taught, and the Crosse commended. For our life oughte so to be framed and ledde, that it should bee nothing els, then a feruent sighyng and a longyng desire

desire for the life to come. But yet so, that this our desire and longyng muste bee wholly staid vpon the onely mercie of Christe: into whom wee muste ardently praye, that he maie please hym, (euen of his owne mercie, and not for any merite that is in vs) to take and translate vs hence into the life to come, where endless ioyes for ever abounde.

- 22 And haue compassion of some, in puttyng difference:
23 And other saue with feare, pullyng them out of the fier:

This place is somewhat darke and obscure to bee vnderstanded, but yet this is the true meaning thereof: Haue ye compassion of some: and saue some. That is, to leade your liues, that it maie euen greene you at the hart, to see some so miserablie blinded, and wilfully obstinate. Reioyce ye not at their miserie, neither take ye any pleasure or ioyce in their lamentable miscreauncie. But meede ye not with their theifline, separate your felues from them, and haue no dealyng or companie with them. Other some, whom ye maie pull out of so greate a daunger, saue and deliuer by fearyng them, and holding them backe with godlie feueritie: deale with them courteously and gentlie, euen as God hath dealt with you: not roughly, not ragyngly, and sharpsly, but mildly and charitably. Dooe not with churlishe sternesse terrifie and so spolie them: but deale with them, as ye would with those that lye in the fier: whom ye ought with carefull diligence, wisely to pul out and saue. If thei bee not contented to be pulled out and deliuered, thei are with gentle meanes and tender mercie to bee boorne withall: not as the Pope and his hereticall Rabbines dole is to bee burned and scorched.

- 23 And hate euen the Garment spotted by the fleshe.

We haue receiued the holie Ghost by Faith, and thereby are wee purified: but yet neuerthelesse, so long as wee here are, this rotten sacke of fleshe and blood

of Sainct Iude.

him bringeth upon vs, which is neuer without whole swarms
of euill spirits. And this is that spotted Garment, which while
wee here live, wee ought to lay aside and put off.

14 Now, vnto him that is able to keepe you, that ye fal
not, and to presente you faultlesse before the pre-
sence of his glorie with ioye.

25 That is, to God onely wise, our Saviour, be glorie,
and Maieshie, and Dominion, and Power, botho
now and for euer, Amen.

This is the conclusion and end of this Epistle. And thus
are the Apostles wnt in the ende of their Writinges,
Benediccynges, Exhortations, Prophecies, to proue, to
wylhe and to giue thankes. Wee see therefore in these two E-
pistles, as well this of Iude, as that seconde of S. Peter,
what a true Christian life is: and how wee maye
discerne the sinceritie of that Doctrinie which
is pure, Catholike, and Christian, from
that which is corrupt, counter-
fette, and altogether
Antichristian.

FINIS.



257





A COMMENTARIE
or Exposition vpon
the twoo Epistles gene-
rall of Saint Peter,
and that of Saint

The I V D E, *Hollis*

1727

First faithfullie gathered out of the
Lectures and Preachings of that wor-
thie Instrumente in Goddes Church,
Doctour Martine Luther. And now
out of Latine, for the singuler benefite
and comfort of the Godlie, fami-
liarlie translated into En-
glishe by Thomas
Newton.

Imprinted at London for Abraham
Veale dwelling in Pauls Church-
yard at the signe of the Labe.

1581.



Daniel Hartinge

8

THE HISTORY OF

THE CITY OF
NEW YORK
FROM THE
FIRST SETTLEMENT
TO THE PRESENT
TIME

By James M. Smith



94
TO THE RIGHT HO-
nourable, Sir Thomas Bromeley

*Knight, one of her Maiesties moſte ho-
nourable priuie Counſell, and
Lorde Chaunceloz of Englande.*



THE translation of
theſe godlie and comforta-
ble Commentaries of Mai-
ſter Luther vpon the Epi-
ſtles generall of the bleſſed
Apoſtles Peter and Jude,
beeing ſullie finiſhed and brought to an ende, it
was the eaſieſt matter of many, where to bethink
mee of a fitte Patrone, vnder whom to ſhield the
labours of ſo worthie an Organe in the Church
of God, and myne owne trauailes therein (ſuche
as thei bee) fro the rancorous rout of ſuche ba-
w-lyng Baalites and arrogant Apiſtes, as with o-
pen lawes will bee readie to barke at the ſounde
doctrin of Faithe and Maners, by hym heerein
with a moſte bolde ſpirite, maintained and vt-
tered. I was (I ſaie) ſoone reſolued with my ſelf,
to ſettle my choiſe in your Lord, hippe: of whoſe
*.ij. cheerefull

The Epistle

cheerefull acceptaunce (suche is your Godlie zeale) I could not any whitte doubt: And of whose courteous construction of my honest and harmelesse meanyng heerein (suche is your honourable inclination) I deemed it almoste hainous, to put any diffidence, or to harbour within mee so muche as a sparke or Mite of the leaste suspection. None so wilfullie blinde, nor so witlesslie beesotted, but hath bothe seene and known, what a generall benefite it pleased the Lorde in mercie, to shewe vnto the worlde, beeyng almoste whollie whelmed in the Suddes of Superstition, and desperatelic drowned in the Dregges of Idolatrie, by the ministerie of this one man: opposyng hymself (in defence of the glorious Gospell of GOD) againste all the Pedlarie of Pope and Popelynges, and againste all the rable of Cozenyng Caterpillers in the Kyngdome of Darke nesse, characterized and brended with the marke of the Beast. The trifyng trashe and ridiculous rifferaffe of whiche Cacolike Synagogue (for so is it muche rather to bee tearmed then Catholike) this man wit^h so vehement and zealous a spirite, hath so throughe anatomized and vnripped, &c) by suche inuincible reasons out of the
infalible

Dedicatorie.

infallible Word of God, ouerthrowen and confuted, that the rotten ragges thereof can not possible bee eftsoones peeced: The crackte credite of suche Motheaten stuffe neuer againe salued: nor the totterynge walles of suche a roistynge and ruffianly raigne, euer any more after the former gallantise be reared vp & reestablished. In so muche that it maie bee thought, that our mercifull God, pittynge the miserable thraldome wherein his people vnder that Romishe Pharao had long laine captiued, and in his Justice, meanyng at length to ridde the worlde of those deade Flies (whiche did nothyng els but corrupte and tainte sweete Ointmentes) and as it were to launce those Botches and Biles, that so long had festured in the bodie of the Common wealthe of Israell, appointed and raised vp this man, to bee as the Malle that should knocke that blasphemous Goliath in the pate, and the Leecbe that should applie vnto him & his greazed generatiō suche a strong Pill, whiche they should neuer bee able to swallowe. His life also & conuersation beynge so vnblameable, that the starkest Balaamite and spightfullest Rabbine among them (of whiche stampe there neuer wanteth store) could neuer iustlie reprove

*.ij.

hym

The Epistle

hym of faultes, other then suche, as generally fol-
lowe the infirmitie of Man. In so muche as that
reuerend and renoumed Clerke Erasmus (whose
testimonie herein maie stande for many, and the
rather for that he some what to muche (the more
pitie) for priuate respectes, bolstered and plaste-
red the deformities and blottes of the Romishe
Clergie) pleasauntly by waie of answer to a que-
stion, mooued vnto hym by the good Duke of Sa-
xony, saied: that the onely reason why poore Lu-
ther was so deadly hated, was for none other
cause, but for that, by his preaching and writing,
hee had taken a waie the Croune from the Pope
and Bishoppes, and the Beallie from the Mon-
kes: and that other wise he was bothe a Godlie, a
learned, a vertuous, and a modest man. In the
compassyng and atchiewyng whereof, little mer-
naile was it, though in his Style and maner of
writyng, he seemed to some to bee ouer crabbed,
seuere, sharpe, and bityng: For (saied he) to re-
mooue sharpe & grosse diseases, God hath sent in
this laste age of the Worlde, a sharpe & austere
Physicion. And as wee reade of the Repairers of
Battered Hierusalem, that with the one hande
thei builde the Wallles, and with the other helde
their

Dedicatorie.

their ſweard, to bee readie to encounter the enemye: So maie wee ſaie of Luther, that he with the one halfe of his studie, combated and conflicted with the Aduerſaries of Gods truthe, and with the other halfe, generallie benefited the Church, by penning & writing ſundrie notable enarrations vpon the Sacred Scriptures, and Catholique Religion. How valiauntlie alſo hee played the Chriſtian Champion againſte Meritemongers, and all Clouters vp of their Saluation with the Figgeleaves of their owne wretched VVoorke and condignitie; and what an vndaunted Hercules he ſhewed hymſelf, in chopping of ſtill thoſe ſuccreaſyng heades of that Italian Hydra, ſundrie his learned Bookes plentifully and at large declare, and this VVoorke among many others doeth ſufficiently attetiſie. The whiche with all humilitie I heere offer and exhibite vnto your lordſhip: aſſuring my ſelf, that for your approoued wiſedome, you will not onely allowe of it, but alſo for the high Authoritie wherein you are worthilie placed, you will accordingly countenance it. The Lorde from heauen bleſſe and ſtrengthen you with his Spirite of zeale, fortitude and boldneſſe, to be a Buttreſſe and Proppe for the propagation,

The Epistle

gation, passage, and continuance of his glorious
Gospell among vs, your poore Countreimen of
this noble Realme of Englande, to the encorage-
ment of all true Professours of the same, and to
the utter terrour, extirpation, and weedyng out
of all cancarde aduersaries and malicious Grin-
nagods, beyng not onelie prickes in the feete, and
Thornes in the eyes, but euen splintes in the han-
des, and Daggers at the hartes of all the godlie:
That by the prudent pollicie, and carefull vigi-
lancie of your Honour, with others her Maie-
sties moſte Noble and zelous Counsellours, all
dolledrenche Drones maie bee espied, and caste
out of the Hiue of the Common wealthe, and ei-
ther bee conuerted, least utterly thei perishe, or
spedily confounded, least thei procure and
breed more treacherous annoiance.

From Butley in Cheshire,
this first of October

1581.

Your L. moſte humble,
Thomas Newton.



The argument of this first E-
pistle of S. Peter, by M. Luther.

¶ Before wee fall in hande with the interpretation of this Epistle, it shall bee verie requisite, first to laye downe vnto the Reader some brieft admonition, whereby he may knowe, bothe how it is to bee esteemed, and also how to attaine to the certaine knowledge thereof.



First of all is to bee noted, that all the Apostles doe handle one and the selfe same doctrine, and therefore is it not well done of some, in that they say there bee onely foure Euangelistes, and foure Gospels, whereas all is one Gospell, what so euer the Apostles haue left in writing.

Now, the Gospell signifieth nothing els then the preaching and publishing of the grace and mercie of God through Christ our Lorde, purchased for vs by his death. And to take it properly, it is not that whiche is contained in bookes and comprehended in letters, but rather the vocall preaching, and the liuely worde and voyce, whiche soundeth in the whole worlde, and is so openly uttered, that it maie euer where bee heard. Neither is it a booke that containeth the Lawe, wherein are many points of good doctrine, as it hath bin hitherto commonly beleueed. For it draweth vs from all confidence and hope of any woorkes of our owne, whereby to become righteous: and declareth vnto vs the riche graces of God, freely and without any of our owne merite giuen vnto vs teaching vs also Christ,

Vpon the first Epistle

who hauing by his merittion appeareth by wrath of God, and sacrificed for our sinnes, hath quite abolished and blotted out our iniquities and by his workes, iustified and made vs righteous.

Now, whosoener either preacheth or writeth these thynges, he teacheth the true Gospell in deede, whiche all the Apostles, but especially S. Paule and S. Peter haue done in their Epistles. Whatsoeuer then is preached or published concerning Christe, is one Gospell, although oue handle it after one sorte, and in one kinde of wordes, an other after an other sorte, and in an other kinde. For a thing may be handled either in many wordes or in fewe, and may be described either brie fly or at large. Howbeit seeing all tendeth vnto no other ende but to teache vs that Christe is our Sauour, and that we through faith in hym, without any our owne workes, are iustified and saued, it is al one Word, and one Gospell, as there is one onely faith, and one Baptisme in the whole Church of Christ.

Thou reapest then nothing written by any of the Apostles, whiche is not also contained in the writings of others that were as it were penners of the Scripture: but thei that haue handled this papme specially and with greater endeuour and studie then the rest, namely that onely faith in Christe doeth iustifie, euen thei are the best Euangelistes of all. Whereupon thou maiest more rightly call the Epistles of Paule the Gospell, then those thinges whiche Matthe we, Marke, and Luke haue written. For thei describe not muche beside the Historie concerning the doinges and miracles of Christe: as for the grace whiche Christe hath purchased for vs, none doeth more fully and fitly entreate therof then S. Paule, especially in his Epistle to the Romans. Now, seeing the Word is of more importance then the actions and doinges of Christe, and that if we should want the one of them, it were farre better to be without the deedes and Historie, then the Wordes and Doctrine, it followeth that those bookees are most highly to be esteemed, whiche entreate especially of the doctrine and wordes of our Lorde Iesus Christe. For as muche as if there were no miracles of Christ, and that we were altogether ignorant of them,

per

yet were his wordes sufficient for vs, and without which wee
can not so muche as liue.

Hereupon therefore it follo weth, that this Epistle of S.
Peter is to bee accounted among the moste excellent booke
of the newe Testament, and is the true and pure Gospell, in
as muche as the Apostle herein teacheth nothing els, then that
whiche Paule and the rest of the Euangelistes doe : namely
sincere faith, and that Christ is freely giuen vnto vs, who ha-
uynge taken awaie our sinnes, is our onely Sauour, as in the
processe of this Epistle we shall see. By this that is here saied,
wee maie likewise iudge of all booke and doctrines, what is
the Gospell, & what is not. For what soeuer is not either pre-
ached or whittten after this sorte, and to this ende, that maie wee
boldly iudge not to bee the Gospell, haue it neuer so faire and
goodly a shewe. This power to iudge haue al Christians,
and not the Pope or Councels alone, whiche face
and crake that thei and none but thei haue au-
thoritie to iudge of doctrines. And thus
muche maie suffice for the argu-
ment : let vs now heare
the Epistle.



A. J. T. B.

The first Epistle generall
of Saint Peter.

The first Chapter.



Eteran Apostle of Iesus Christe,
to the straungers that dwell here
and there throughout Pōrus, Ga-
latia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithy-
nia;

2 Elect accordyng to the fore-
knowledge of G O D the Father
vnto sanctification of the Spirit,
through obedience and sprinck-

ling of the bloud of Iesus Christ: Grace and peace be multi-
plied vnto you.

3 Blessed be G O D, euen the Father of our Lorde Iesus
Christ, whiche according to his abundant mercie hath be-
gotten vs againe vnto a liuely hope by the resurrection of Ie-
sus Christ from the dead.

4 To an inheritaunce immortall and vndefiled, and that
fadeth not awaie, reserved in heauen for you,

5 Whiche are kept by the power of God through faith
vnto saluation, whiche is prepared to bee shewed in the last
tyme.

6 Wherein ye reioyce, though now for a season (if neede
require) ye are in heauinesse, through manifold tentations,

7 That the triall of your faith, beyng much more precious
then gold that perisheth (though it be tried with fire) might
be founde vnto your praise, and honour and glorie, at the ap-
pearyng of Iesus Christ:

8 Whom ye haue not scene, and yet loue him, in whom
now, though ye see hym not, yet do you beleue, and reioyce
with

with ioye vnſpeakeable and glorious:

9 Receiuyng the ende of your faith, euen the ſaluation of your ſoules.

10 Of the whiche ſaluation the Prophets haue Inquired and ſearched, whiche prophesied of the grace that ſhould come vnto you,

11 Searchyng when or what tyme the Spirit whiche teſtified before of Chriſt whiche was in them, ſhould declare the ſuffrynges that ſhould come vnto Chriſt, and the glorie that ſhould followe.

12 Vnto whom it was reueiled, that not vnto themſelues, but vnto vs thei ſhould miniſter the thinges which are now ſhewed vnto you by them whiche haue preached vnto you the Goſpell by the holy Ghoſt ſent doune from heauen, the whiche thinges the Angels deſire to beholde.

13 Wherefore girde vp the loynes of your minde: bee ſober, & truſt perfectly on the grace that is brought vnto you, by the reuelation of Ieſus Chriſt,

14 As obedient children, not faſhioning your ſelues vnto the former luſtes of your ignorance:

15 But as he whiche hath called you, is holy, ſo be ye holy in all maner of conuerſation,

16 Becauſe it is written: Be ye holy, for I am holy.

17 And if ye call him Father, whiche without reſpect of perſone iudgeth according to euery mans woorke, paſſe the tyme of your dwellyng here in feare:

18 Knowing that ye were not redeemed with corruptible thinges, as ſiluer and golde, from your vaine conuerſation, receiued by the traditions of the fathers,

19 But with the precious bloud of Chriſt, as of a Lambe vndeſiled, and without ſpot.

20 Whiche was ordeined before the foundation of the worlde, but was declared in the laſt tymes for your ſakes,

21 Which by his meanes doe beleecue in God that raiſed him from the dead, and gaue him glorie, that your faith and hope might be in God,

Vpon the first Epistle

22 Hauing purified your soules in obeying the truthe through the Spirit, to loue brotherly without fainyng, loue one an other with a pure harte feruently,

23 Beyng borne a newe, not of mortall seede, but of immortal, by the worde of God, who liueth and endureth for euer.

24 For all fleshe is as grasse, and all the glorie of man is as the flower of grasse. The grasse withereth, and the flower falleth awaie.

25 But the worde of the Lord endureth for euer: and this is the worde whiche is preached among you.



gTh

The first Chapter.

Verse 1. Peter an Apostle of Iesus Christ, to the straungers that dwell here and there throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,

2 Elect accordyng to the foreknowledge of God the Father, vnto the sanctification of the Spirite, through obedience and sprincklyng of the blood of Iesus Christ.



This is bothe an inscription and subscription. Thou seest here in the verie beginnyng, that that whiche is here wyitten, is the Gospell. We saith that he is an Apostle, whiche signifyeth a Legate or Messenger, that doeth by worde of mouthe the businesse whiche he hath receiued in charge: which name, being so englished of the Greeke worde *Αγγελος*, because it is now commonly knowne, what it signifyeth, I haue not thought it good by any other phrase or terme, to expresse and translate it. Howbeit properly it signifyeth hym, that declareth something by worde of mouth: not a mere carrier of letters, but a messenger that with liuely voice deliuereth his errand, and by wordes uttereth his commission and charge: and suche in Latine we call *Oratores*, that is, *Orators*. Whereas the he calleth himself the Apostle of Iesus Christ, it is as much as if he had said: I haue charge from Iesus Christ, to preache of this same Iesus Christe vnto you. Marke here how at the first they are excluded & debarred whatsoeuer they be, & preache any of the dreggite and dootyng dottrines of seelie foolish and vaine men: for he is a messenger of Iesus Christ, whiche doeth that whiche Christ hath commaunded hym: If he preache any other thyng, he is not Christes messenger, and therefore in no wise to bee heard. But if he preache that whiche Christe hath enloped hym, then is he to bee heard: and to heare hym is as muche as to heare Christ hymself being present.

To

Vpon the first Epistle

I

To the Straungers, Elect



He Apostle wrote this Epistle to those Countries that are here mentioned. Thei were in tyme paste Christian, but are now in miserable subiection and flauerie vnto the Turke, among whom thou maest perhaps euen at this daie finde some that faithfullie beleue in Christe. Pontus is a greate and large countrie bordering vpon the sea: next vnto it is Cappadocia, the borders and limites of whiche twoo countries are almoste conioyned. On the hinder parte is Galatia, on the foymer toward the Sea Asia, and Bithynia, all situate toward the East, greate and large Countries. Paule preached personallie in Galatia & Asia, whether he did y same also in Bithynia, I doe not certainly know: But in the furthermost two, it is certain that he did not preache. Straungers are thei whom we call Forreiners, namely such as come fro some other place, and not bozne in the Countrie wherein wee are. Now the Apostle calleth them so, because thei had been Gentiles. Neither is it to be thought straunge, that Peter beeing the Apostle of the Jewes, did neuer thelesse write also vnto the Gentiles. The Jewes call those Proselytes, (that is, admitted to the state of the Jewes) who beeing not lineallie of their stocke, and of the blood of Abrahams, had notwithstanding embraced Iudaisme, and submitted theim selues to the obseruation of their lawe. To these therefore the Apostle writeth, who before had been Gentiles, and therefore no members of the common wealthe of Israell, but beeing now conuerted to the faith, had adioyned them selues to the faithfull Jewes. Wherefore he calleth them Straungers Elect, whom vndoubtedly hee none other wise reputeth, then true Christians, and to these alone he writeth. Whiche manner of calling them, containeth in it no common doctrine, as wee shall hereafter more at large heare.

2

Accordingyng to the foreknowledge of GOD the Father.

He

HE calleth the Elect, but how? Surely not of them selues, but accordyng to the ordinance of GOD. For it lieth not in our owne powers, to byng our selues vnto heauen, nor to haue faithe when wee liste: neither will God receiue into heauen all whom so euer: Naie, hee will verie diligently and circumspectly liste, examine, and trie all them that be his. Awaite therefore with all mannes doctrine of free will, and of all strength in our selues: this thing dependeth not of our, but of Gods good will and election.

2 Vnto sanctification of the Spirit.

God hath predestinate vs to be holie, and that spirituallie. These wordes, holie and spirituall, the Belligods of the Romishe Cleargie, haue shameleslie taken from the true professors of the Gospell, and entailed the same vnto their Papietisthe Donkerie, whiche state thei doe now call holie and spirituall. Euen as thei haue doen by this name Church, so that thei will haue none but the Pope and his trusted Bishops, to bee the Church, sayng, that the Church hath commaunded this and that: whereas thei in the meane tyme at their pleasures, doe and determine what thei liste. Holinesse consisteth in nothyng lesse then in this, that one bee a Donke, a Freere, or a Nunne, or to bee a Shauelyng and weare a Coule, or some petyng religious habite.

The word, Spirit, signifieth that we should be holie in hart, inwardly and in spirit before God. And this is stated especially for this cause, to shew that nothing is holie, but that whiche God maketh holie in vs. For at that tyme the Jewes had many outward sanctifications, but the true sanctification thei had not. This then is the meanyng of saint Peter: God hath predestinate you to this ende, that now as the last ye should bee holie in deede, accordyng as saint Paule saith in the fourth to the Ephesians: In righteousness and true holinesse, that is in holinesse whiche is sincere, and altogether entire. For such outward holinesse as the Jewes had, is nothyng esteemed,

B.J.

nor

Vpon the first Epistle

not regarded before God. After this sort doeth the Scripture call vs, holie and Saintes, when wee beleue, beeing as yet liuing here on earth. But our Rabbines the Papistes, haue taken this name from vs, saying that we are not Holie, but that thei onely are Holie, whiche are in heauen. We must therefore repostesse, and againe take this notable name vnto vs. Thou must needs be Holie, yet must thou not thinke that thou hast this holinesse of thy self, or by thine owne merite, but that thou art therefore Holie for that thou hast the worde of GOD: for that the kyngdome of heauen is thine, and for that thou art become entirely righteous and holy through Christ. These thinges must thou confesse, if thou wilt bee a Christian. For this were extreme ignominie, & blasphemie to the name of Christ, if we should so denie this honour to his blood, as not to beleue that by it onely our spines are cleane washed awaie, and wee sanctified. Thou must beleue therefore and confesse, that thou art holie, yet by the blood of Christ, not by thine owne righteousness: and this thou must doe with suche certaintie and constancie, that in this cause thou maiest not sticke (if neede be) to spende euen thy life, and holdst to abide and looke for whatsoever maye hereupon come vnto thee.

2 Through obedience and sprincklyng of the blood of Iesus Christe.



After this sorte saith the Apostle, commeth it to passe that wee bee holie, when wee beleue and obey the Worde of Christ, and are sprinckled with his blood. And here saint Peter hath used some what an other maner of speeche then saint Paule: Per is it in effecte as muche as when S. Paule saith, wee are saved through Faith in Christ: because it is Faith whiche maketh that wee bee attentive, and obedient to Christ and his holie Worde. Wherefore to obey the Worde of God, is as muche as to bee subiect to Christ, to bee sprinckled with his blood and to beleue. For it is verie greuous to Nature

Nature, to bee so wholie subiecte to Christe, as altogether to forslowe and cease from our owne matters, altogether to neglect our owne causes, and to counte all that we doe to be synnes: Nature therefore stoutly resisteth, and striueth againste this doctrine, and yet neuerthelesse it must at the laste soupe, and peele it self thereunto.

Of Sprincklyng we read in the 51. Psalm. Sprinkle me with Hyssop, O Lorde, and I shalbe cleane. He alludeth to the Lawe of Moyses, from whence sainte Peter tooke this kinde of speeche, thereby to reuele Moyses vnto vs, and as it were to byng vs into the kynge highwaie of rightely vnderstandyng the Scriptures. For whē Moyses had builded the Tabernacle, he tooke the blood of Goates, and therewith sprinckled bothe the Tabernacle and all the people. Now this sprincklyng did not inwardlie sanctifie in spirite, but onely outwardlie and in externall thinges, and therefore is there neede of a spirituall clesyng, forasmuche as that sanctification was outward and carnall, whereof there is no regarde before God: yet did God thereby as it were, by a Type or figure, signifie this spirituall sanctification. That then whiche S. Peter here saith is thus muche in effect: The Jewes please them selues in outward holinesse, wherby thei are thought righteous, and of a good lffe before men, but thei counte you among the reprobate: wherbye you haue a sprincklyng farre better, for ye are sprinckled in spirite, and are clesed inwardlie. The Jewes sprinckle them selues with the blood of Goates outwardlie, but ye are sprinckled in your consciences inwardly, so that your harte is cleane and therefore herein you haue greate cause to reioyce.

Hereof it is that the Gentiles bee no more Gentiles: even as those righteous Jewes are no more righteous by thei sprincklyng, for these thynges are now chaunged and altered. None other sprincklyng is required, but that whiche maie conuert vs, and make vs spirituall. Now to sprinckle after this sort, is nothyng els then to preache, that Christe hath for this cause shed his blood, onely to make intercession for vs vnto his Father, and to saie: Forke deare Father, thou seest here my

B.ij.

blood

Vpon the first Epistle

blood, whiche I haue shedde for this synner. Here, if thou doe beleue, thou art trueste sprinkled. And thus thou seest what is the true maner of sprinklyng. Now if all the Popes, Pounkes, and sacrificyng Priestes should at once tumble together and byng all their trash, rifferaffe and baggage, thei are not able either to teache, or doe so muche as S. Peter doeth here in these fewe wordes. And this is the subscription of the Epistle, wherein he declareth his office, what that is whiche he preacheth. Wherefore that whiche is here taught, is the onely Gospell: all other kindes of doctrine (if men account theim any waie necessarie to saluation) whiche sounde not after this softe, are to bee troden vnder our feete, reiected, forsaken, refused, and abandoned: Yea all those bookes are to bee loathed, and misliked, whiche hauyng gaie titles of good Moores, Prayers, Indulgences, Pardons and suche like, are not plainlie, directlie, and soundlie grounded vpon this foundation.

2. Grace and peace be multiplied vnto you,

BEFORE S. Peter obserueth that maner whiche the Apostle Paule in his salutyng vseth, although not in euery respect. And that which he saith is in effect thus much: Ye haue now peace & grace, but not perfectly, therefore must ye continually profite, untill that olde Adam bee wholly killed and mortified in you. Grace is the fauour of God: here hath it his beginning in vs, but needefull and requisite is it that it alwaies become daily more and more effectuell in vs, and take encrease euen till our dying daie. He that acknowledgeth, beleueth and is fully perswaded in his conscience, that God is fauourable vnto him, is assuredly possessed of this grace: and his hart comfortably enioyeth peace, so that he feareth neither the world nor Deuilles. For he knoweth that God, who hath power ouer al thinges, is fauourable and mercifull vnto him, and that he will deliuer him from death, hell, and al incommodities whatsoener: hereupon his conscience is at peace within it self and is ioyfull and glad. This doeth Sainct Peter here wishe vnto

vnto the faithfull, which is a true Christian salutation, where-
with all Christians ought to salute one an other. Thus haue
wee the inscription with the salutation, and now beginneth he
the matter of his Epistle.

3 Blessed be God, euen the Father of our Lorde
Iesus Christ, whiche accordyng to his abundant
mercie hath begotten vs againe vnto a liuely hope
by the resurrection of Iesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance immortall and vndefiled,
and that fadeth not awaie, reserved in heauen for
vs,

5 Which are kept by the power of God through
faith vnto saluation, whiche is prepared to be she-
wed in the last tyme:

6 Wherein ye reioyce, though now for a season
(if neede require) ye are in heauines through ma-
nifolde tentations:

7 That the triall of your faith, beyng much more
precious then golde that perisheth (though it bee
tryed with fire) might be founde vnto your praise
and honour and glorie at the appearing of Iesus
Christ:

8 Whom ye haue not seen, and yet loue hym, in
whom now though ye see him not, yet do you be-
leeue, and reioyce with ioye vnspeakeable and
glorious,

9 Recciuing the ende of your faith, euen the sal-
uation of your soules.



In this Induction or Preface we see the wo-
des and nature of a true Apostolicall Pastor:
suche a beginnyng (I saie) wherein wee maie
plainly perceiue and note that to be true, which
was said afore: namely that this Epistle amōg
all the reste is of moste singular excellencie. For, in the verie

B. iij.

entrance

Vpon the first Epistle

entraunce hee beginneth to declare what Christe is, and what benefite wee receiue by hym, when as hee saith, that wee are begotten againe of God vnto a liuely hope by the resurrection of Iesus Christ. Also that all grises are bestowed vpon vs of the Father, of his mere mercie without any our deserte. These are in deede true and right Euangelicall phrazes, these are comfortable speeches moste meete to bee published and preached. But (alas) what small stoare of suche kinde of preaching is there to bee founde in the Bookes, euen of them that are accounted the best. The written workes euen of Hierome and Augustine, what small consonancie and agreement haue they with these wordes: And yet must Iesus Christ bee thus preached, that he died and rose againe, and why hee died and did rise againe: that men beeyng thoroughly moued with this kinde of preaching, maie beleue in hym, and beleuyng maie obtaine saluation. This it is to preache the true Gospell in deede. Whatsoeuer is not preached after this sorte, is not the Gospell, whosoever hee bee that preacheth it.

The very summe then and effect of these wordes is this: that Christ by his resurrection hath brought vs to his father, and hereby also Saint Peter goeth about euen by our Lorde Iesus Christe to bring vs to the Father, and to set hym a mediator betweene GOD and vs. It hath bin hitherto preached that wee must call vpon Saints, to bee our intercessors with God. Hereupon wee haue runne to the holy Virgine Marie, and haue made her our Mediatrix, leauyng Christe in the meane season as an angrie Iudge. So doeth not the Scripture, it commeth and approacheth nerer: it giueth this glorie to Christ our Lord, that he is our onely mediator, by whom alone we must come vnto the Father. Inestimable treasure which is giuen vs by Christe, namely that wee maie goe to the Father and aske the inheritance wherof Saint Peter here speaketh.

These wordes doe moreover plainly shewe what wrynde the Apostle had, why that so earnestly and with such vehement ardentie he began to praise the Father, and will haue vs also

to praise and blesse hym, for the incomparable riches which he hath giuen vnto vs, in that he hath begotten vs againe, and that befoze we could euen so muche as thinke thereof, muche lesse preuent hym, so that here is nothing remaining to preach and praise, but the onely mercie of God. And therefore can we boaste of no workes at all, but must confesse that we haue all through his onely mercie, whatsoeuer wee haue. Here is now no more Lawe, no wrath as in tyme past there was, when he made the Jewes to flee, beyng stricken with terror, so that they durst not goe vnto the Mount. God doeth not now still vrges and strike vs, but handleth vs as fauourably as maie be, fashionyng and makyng vs anewe: neither giueth hee vs grace to doe one good woorkes of twoo, but frameth in vs a newe creature and a newe life, so that wee bee now an other thyng then wee were befoze when wee were the sonnes of Adam: namely wee are translated from the inheritance of Adam to the inheritance of God, that hee maie bee our Father, and we his children, and therein his heires euen of all good thynges that he hath. See what excellent thynges are in the Scripture handled concernyng this matter. Now inasmuche as wee are regenerate, and the sonnes and heires of God, wee are equall in dignitie and honoꝝ with Saint Paule, Saint Peter, the holy Virgin Marie, and all the Sanctes. For wee haue the same treasure from God, and all good thynges as largely as they. They were no other wise regenerate then we, wherefoze they haue no more then all other Christians.

3 Vnto a liuely hope.



Our life here vpon the earth, is for none other cause, but that we should help others, other wise it were best that God should euen straight after our baptism, and the receiuyng of faith, ende our daies, and suffer vs to dye. Howbeit he permitteth vs to liue here to this ende, that we maie bring others also vnto the faith, which he him self hath doen to vs befoze. Now while wee liue here

an

Vpon the first Epistle

on the earth, wee liue in hope. For albeit wee be certaine that through faith wee haue all the good thinges of God (for faith as it assuredly bringeth with it regeneration, so doeth it bring also adoption and inheritance) howbeit we see not this as yet, and therefore doeth it as yet consist in hope, being somewhat removed from our sight that wee can not see and beholde it. Now this the Apostle calleth the hope of life: which is an Hebrew kinde of speeche, as is this, The man of sinne. Wee call that a liuely hope, whereby we certainly hope & assuredly looke for eternall life, whiche is now hid as it were with a veile, that it can not bee scene, neither is it presently perceived but in the harte through faith, as Iohn in his first Epistle Chap. 3. writeth: Now are wee the sonnes of God, and yet doeth it not appeare what wee shalbe: but we knowe that when he shal appeare, we shalbe like hym: for we shall see hym as he is.

Because the life present, and the life to come can not be together, neither can it bee that wee should eate, drinke, sleepe, watche, and doe other workes of Nature which this life bringeth with it, and bee therewith also blessed: therefore can wee not attaine vnto this, to liue for euer, vntlesse wee first dye, and forgoe this present life. Therefore while wee here liue, wee must still stande in hope vntill it please God to call vs hence to beholde and see, those good thinges which we now hope after. And how maie we come vnto this liuely hope? By the resurrection, (saith the Apostle of Iesus Christ) from the dead. I haue oftentimes saied, that none can rightly beleue in God, and come vnto hym without a meane, for as muche as wee are all the children of wrath, and of our selues can doe nothing that is acceptable before God: wee haue therefore neede of another, by whom we maie appeare before hym, who may make intercession for vs, and reconcile vs vnto hym. Now there is none other mediator then the Lord Christ, who is the Sonne of God. It is therefore no true faith whiche the Turkes and Tewes haue, who saie and beleue that GOD is the maker bothe of heauen and earth: for thus doeth the Deuill also beleue, and yet doeth this beleeffe nothing at all profite hym.

Chri

They presume to come into the sight of God without Christe the mediator. Thus saith Saint Paule in the first to the Romanes: Wee haue accessse vnto God through faith, (not by our selues, but) by Christ. Wherefore wee must haue Christe with vs, wee must come with hym, wee must satisfie God by hym, and doe all thinges with God by hym and in his name. The same is this in effect whiche Saint Peter saith in this place: for it is as muche as if he had said: we certainly looke for eternall life although wee liue here on the earth: yet no otherwise then by the resurrection of Christe, that is to saie, even therefore, because he is risen againe, ascended into heauen, and sitteth on the right hande of his Father. For this cause did hee ascende, that he might giue vnto vs his spirit, whereby heping regenerate we might bee holde to goe to the Father and saie: Behold I come before thee O mercifull father, and praie vnto thee, not that I putte any trust or confidence in any waier of myne owne, but for that my Lorde Christ doeth make intercession for me, and is myne Advocate. All these wordes carie an ardent efficacie and fierie force, where there is a harte that beleueth: where the harte beleueth not, there all suche words are colde, neither doeth the conscience feele any comfort there.

Wee maie here also iudge and knowe, whiche is sincere doctrine and true Christian preaching and which is not. For, hee that is a Preacher of the Gospell, must moste zelously and diligently preache forthe the resurrection of Christ: whiche he that doeth not, is no Apostle. For this is the Summe of our faith. And those Bookes of all other are the best and the excellentest, whiche teache and treat vpon this pointe principally and chiefly, as before hath bene declared. This article of our faith is of most waigherie importance. For if Christ had not risen againe, all our comforte and hope were in vaine: and all whatsoeuer Christ hath either done or suffered, should be to vs in no speede. And therefore this manner of teaching is most requisite. Behold, Christ hath dyed for vs, and taken vpon him to satisfie for vs to the iustice of his Father, against Sinne.

C. j.

Death

Vpon the first Epistle

Drach and Hell, with whom he had a most sharpe and bitter encounterie, yet could none of them ouercome hym, but were by hym all conquered and subdued, for that he was the stronger. He rose again (maugre the forces of them all) & brought them in subietion to himselfe, and that for none other cause, but to set vs free and at libertie, out of the daunger and thraldomie of them. This if wee steadfastlie beleue, wee haue a perfect assurance and full possession of all these benefites: whiche beyng ethe waie impossible to bee brought to passe by our selues or any strength that is in vs, it behoued that Christ should performe the same. Otherwise, there had been no cause, why he should haue descended from heauen hither among vs, vnto wretched and sinfull men.

And therefore when men in preaching attribute any of these thinges to our woorkes, they doe nothing els but cause that these so necessarie pointes of doctrine cannot afterwards take any place in the hartes of the hearers, nor be rightly vnderstood of them. O, how well ought these thinges to be known to vs Christians: how thzoughly ought this Epistle to be vnderstood of vs?

- 4 To an inheritaunce immortall and yndefiled, and that fadeth not awaie.



WE hope not for suche a substance and inheritaunce, as is not present: but wee liue in hope of an inheritaunce whiche is present in deede, and is immortall, is also vndefiled, and fadeth not awaie. This inheritanner wee haue perpetual-ly, and without ende: howbeit wee doe not as yet see the same. These are wordes sojerdle, and of wonderfull efficacie: and he in whose minde they are firmly fixed, will be (as I thinke) little moued with desire of riches, and pleasures of this worlde. For how can it bee, that one should so set his minde vpon these transitorie riches and delighes, if he beleue those thynges, whiche bee here spoken? For when woold he wealche, and re-
ene

rene treasures bee compared to these thinges, it appeareth straight, how those thinges of the worlde endure but a small tyme, and doe some passe awaie: but these thinges continue for ever, and doe neuer faile nor fade. Moreover, all the thynges of the worlde are vnpure, and doe defile vs, for there is no man here so godly, but in one respect or other he is caried away, and defiled with the vanities and pleasaunt thinges of this life: but this inheritance is undefiled and pure, and he that possesseth the same, remaineth for ever immaculate. Finally, this inheritance doeth not fade, doeth not decaie, neither is ever subiect to any corruption: but euery yearthly thyng, although it bee as hard as Iron and Stones, is neuertheless changed, and continueth not still. As soone as man also becommeth old, his beautie is gone, and he becommeth lothsome and vnamiable. Howbeit, this inheritance is farre from mutation or change, it alwaies remaineth, it is alwaies freshe and floozing. There is no pleasure so greate on the yearth, whiche will not by continuance become lothsome and tedious, as we see there is at the laste a tediousnesse in all thynges: but our good thynges here spoken of, are otherwise, whereof there is not sacietie for ever. All whiche we obtaine in Christ, through the mercie of GOD, when we firmly beleue, that thei are freely giuen vnto vs. For how should we miserable men by our owne workes merite those so greate good thynges, whiche no reason or vnderstandyng of man is able so muche as to comprehend, or by imagination of harte once to conceiue?

4 Reserued in heauen for you.

This inheritance immortall, undefiled, and that fa-
doeth not a waie is vndoubtedly ours: it is onely for a
little while remoued and kepte from our sight, vntill
these eyes bee closed vpp, and this mortall life ended: Then
shall we certainly finde and see the same, vnlesse wee bee vnder-
teuynge. And because wee should not doubt of the certaintie
thereof, the Apostle here addeth that this inheritance, where-

C.ij.

unto

Vpon the first Epistle

unto no corruption can cleaue, is reserved for vs in heauen.

5 Whiche are kepte by the power of God through faith vnto saluation.



In hope (saith the Apostle) looke for this excellent inheritance, wherunto wee come by faith. For these doe in this sorte followe one another: By the Woordes is wrought in vs Faith: by faith that newe birth, and by this newe birthe wee come vnto hope, so that wee certainly looke for these thynges, and are thoughtlie assured thereof. Wherefore saint Peter sayeth here that these thynges must be doen by faith, and not by our woikes.

The Apostle here expressely saith: Ye are by the power of God kepte vnto saluation. There are many who hauning heard the Gospell, how that faith onely doeth iustifie without woorkes, doe by and by burst forth and saie: Wee also doe beleue: thinking that that bare opinion, whiche they haue vnto them selues, is right faith. Wee haue already taught, and that out of the Scriptures, that it is not in our power to dooe euen the least good woork that is, without the especiall assistance of Gods Spirit, how then shall wee by our owne strength arrogate that, whiche of all other is most excellent; namely to beleue? These cogitations therefore are a mere dreame, and thinges vaine and sonde: Gods power must be present to woork in vs, as Saint Paule writeth, Ephes. I. 17. God giue vnto you the Spirit of wisdom, that yee may knowe what is the exceeding greatnesse of his power to vs ward whiche beleue; according to the woorking of his mightie power. &c. For it is not onely by the will of God, but also by a certaine power of his, that we doe beleue: wherby wee are to learne, that it is no lesse matter to make faith in one, then it is to create againe heauen and earth.

Wee maye evidently perceiue therefore, that they little knowe what they saie, whiche vse suche woordes as these: how
can

can onely faithe doe all, keeping many beleue: whiche doe no good woorkes at all: For thei thinke their owne imagination to bee faithe, and that faithe also maie bee without good woorkes. But wee saie with saincte Peter, that faithe is the power of GOD: In whom soeuer God woorketh thus, the same is a regenerate and a new borne creature, so that then of faith there can not but naturallie followe good woorkes. Wherefore, it shalbe needefulle to saie to a Christian: doe this or doe that good woork: forasmuche as of his owne accord, unbidden, he woorketh nothing but good woorkes. Howbeit he is to bee hereof admonished, that he dooe not receiue hym self with any false, counterfayte, and supposed faithe. Doe not therefore take any regarde to those vaine talkers, that can prattle muche of these thynges, whose woordes not withstanding, are but as winde & meere trifles. Of such, Paule speaketh, 1. Cor. 4. I will come vnto you, and will knowe, not the wordes of them that are puffed vp, but spirituall power. For the kyngdome of GOD consisteth not in woordes, but in power. Where this power of GOD is not, there is neither true faithe, nor good woorkes. Wherefore thei vndoubtedly are liers, whiche boaste themselves of the name and faith of Christ, and doe (not withstanding) leade a leude and wicked life. For assuredly if the power of God bee present, thei can not but become other maner of men then suche.

But what meaneth that, whereas S. Peter saith: By the power of God ye are kepte vnto saluation: surely euen this: Faith (whiche the power of God keepng in vs, and wherewith wee are replenished) doeth woork in vs, is a thing so noble and excellent, that by it wee haue certaine and manifest knowledge of all thynges, that pertaine to saluation: keepng now able to iudge, and freely pponounce of all thinges, whiche are in the yearth, as for example: This doctrine is sincere, and sounde, that is corrupt and false: this life is good, that is euill: this was well dooen, that otherwise. And what soeuer suche a man doeth define, and determine, is so in deede. For hee can not bee deceiued, but is preserved and kepte by the power of

C. iij.

God,

Vpon the first Epistle

God, & remaineth iudge of all doctrines. Contrariwise, where faithe and the power of God is not, there is nothing but error and blindness: there reason is caried away hither and thither, from one woorkes to another, in as much as it striveth by her owne woorkes to come unto heauen, and therefore alwaies thinketh: Behold, this will bying me to heauen, let me worke this, and I shall bee partaker of eternall felicitie and blessednesse. Hereupon haue overspread the worlde suche rabbles and swarmes of Monasteries, Altars, sacrificyng Priestes, Monkes, Friars, and Vicaries. Into suche greate blindnesse doth God suffer them to fall, whiche doe not beleue: but so as that beleue hee preferueth and affordeth a right vnderstandyng in all thynges, that wee maie not bee condemned through this blindnesse, but through his mercie attaine saluation.

5 Which is prepared to be shewed in the laste tyme.

That is, the inheritance whereunto ye are appointed, is already purchased, and from the begynnyng of the worlde prepared, but now it is hid, it is as yet covered, and as it were closed and sealed vp: but after a while it shall in a moment be opened and reueiled, that we maie plainly see it.

6 Wherein ye reioyce, though now for a season (if neede require) ye are in heavinesse, through manifold tentations.



Thou bee a Christian, and lookest for this inheritance of saluation, thou must needs wholly depende vpon it, and utterly contemne all earthly thynges: thou must also confesse, and openly affirme, that all the vnderstandyng, wisdom, & holinesse of this worlde is altogether nothing. Wherefore thou must looke for no other, but that the worlde will condemne and persecute thee: And therefore hath Sainct Peter rightlie ioyned together these thynges, Faith, Hope, and the crosse

crosse of affliction, for asmuche as one of these proceedeth out
 of an other. Howbeit, he giueth no small comfozt to them that
 suffer persecution: for his wordes vpon sounde thus: This
 heauinesse shall endure but a little while, after ward ye shall for
 euer reioyce. For saluation is already prepared for you, wher
 fore bee in the meane season patient in afflictions, whiche ye
 suffer. This is a right and Christian consolation, not as the
 doctrines of men doe comfozt, whiche haue relation no further
 but to bee ridde and deliuered from outward discommodities.
 The Apostle speaketh not here of any suche corporall comfozt.
 It is no discommoditie, if outward troubles come: with a good
 courage sustaine & suffer: perthynke not how ye maie shake
 them of, and bee deliuerd from them; but rather thinke thus
 with your selues: Mine inheritance is already prepared, these
 afflictions shall shortly cease. So shall that temporall com-
 fozt bee taken awaie, and that eternall consolation whiche wee
 haue in God, supplie the place thereof. Howeuer these wordes
 are diligently to be noted, whiche the Apostle addeth, when he
 saith (if neede require) whiche in effect he uttereth also after
 ward Chapter 3. in these wordes: If the will of God bee so.
 There be many men which (as it were), with a certayne force
 strue to come vnto heauen; and euen by and by to thrust in:
 and therefore laye vpon them selues a crosse, and an affliction
 accordyng to their owne opinion and iudgement: so foolishlie is
 reason giuen to extoll her owne woorkes. But God utterlie
 disalloweth all suche dealyng. For our owne woorkes whiche
 wee make choise of, are not of any force before hym, we must
 looke what he will laie vpon vs, and what he will sende vnto
 vs: that we maie walke and followe whither he doeth lead and
 guide vs. Wherefore there is no neede why thou shouldest
 seeke or procure to thy self affliction: If neede so require, that
 is, if it bee the will of God that thou shalte suffer, then cheare-
 fullie take the Crosse vpon thee, and comfozte thy self with
 hope, and expectation of that saluation, whiche is not tempo-
 rall, but eternall.

¶ That

Vpon the first Epistle

7 That the triall of your faith, being much more precious then golde that perisheth (though it be tried with fire) might be sounde &c.



This is the effect of the crosse and of those manifold afflictions whiche wee suffer in this life, that sincere faith maie bee knowne from that whiche is false and counterfeit. And for this cause doeth the Lord so afflict vs, that our faith maie be tried, exercised and made manifest to the world, that others also maie bee invited and wonne to the same faith by our example, and wee at the last maie attaine vnto glorie. For as wee praise God: so will he againe also praise, glorifie, and honour vs: when as those counterfeit and lying Hypocrites; who haue contemned the right waie, shall be subject to shame and confusion. The Scripture doeth often compare the crosse vnto fire: so here Solut Peter compareth gold which is tried with fire, to the triall of faith whiche is made by the crosse and afflictions. The fire doeth not diminish the Golde, but cleanse it and purifieth it; that whatsoeuer drossie substance is mixed with it, maie be separated from it. After the same sorte layeth God the crosse vpon all Christians, whereby thei maie be (as it were) scoured and polished. And it was well said of the Apostle: That the trial of your faith &c. That is your faith must be tried and purified, euen as the Moyle is pure, wherunto alone ye must sticke, and trust vnto nothing els. Now, this purging, scouring and polishing of vs by the crosse, is daily very necessary for vs; because otherwise that olde and dull Adam would still to muche hang vpon vs, and dull the spirit, and make our faith impure.

Suche then is the life of a true Christian, that it continually becometh better and purer. For when through the worde of the Gospell wee doe beleue; wee are iustified and beginne to be purged; yet as long as we are in the flesh, we can not be altogether cleane and pure. And therefore doeth God cast vs into the midst of the fire, that is, into affliction, ignominie
and

and trouble, whereby wee are daily moze and moze purged, untill suche tyme as wee dye. This purgynge wee can attaine vnto by no workes of our owne: for how should the outwarde worke purifie the harte within? Now, when faith is after this sorte tried, whatsoeuer was mixed with it, or was seined and counterfait, must needes bee remoued and separated from it. Hereupon at the last when Christe shall appeare, shall followe magnificent honour, praise, and glorie.

- 8 And reioyce with ioye vnspeakeable & glorious:
9 Receiuyng the ende of your faith, euen the saluation of your soules.



The Apostle saith they haue vnspeakeable and glorious gladnesse and ioye, because it bringeth with it honour and glorie, when as the worlde hath suche ioye, whereof cometh ignominie and shame. Saint Peter speaketh here of true spirituall ioye moze plainly then thou shalt reade almost in the whole Scripture: yet coulde he not fully utter & declare the same. Now, these things which haue bin saied are part of the preface, wherein the Apostle sheweth both what faith in Christ is, and also how the same must be proued and purged by aduersities and afflictions whiche God doth sende. It now followeth that this faith is contained and promised in the Scriptures.

10 Of the whiche saluation the Prophets haue inquired and searched, whiche prophesied of the grace that should come vnto you,

11 Searchyng when or what tyme the Spirit whiche testified before of Christe whiche was in them, should declare the suffrynges that should come vnto Christ, and the glorie that should followe.

12 Vnto whom it was reucaled, that not vnto them selues, but vnto vs they should minister the

D.j.

things